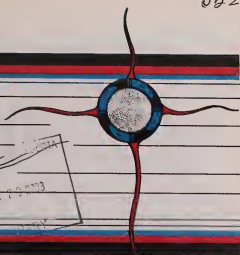




ALBERTA NATIVE NEWS



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AFN accuses liberals of trying to ram through Governance Act

Assembly of First Nations National Chief Matthew Coon Come said that the Liberal government is undermining democracy and attacking First Nations rights by trying to ram the First Nations Governance Act (Bill C-7) through the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs (SCAA). The Committee met in-camera earlier this month to debate a Government motion to limit debate on amendments to Bill C-7 and on all future Bills it might review in this Parliamentary session.

"This same government that claims it will teach First Nations about openness, accountability and transparency is meeting behind closed doors and attempting to use its majority to limit discussion and stifle democratic debate on its new Indian Act," said National Chief Coon Come. "The Committee only finished its hearings on Monday of this week. How can they have reviewed and analyzed the testimony from witnesses, especially given the fact that the vast majority of witnesses spoke against the bill. The people have spoken: withdraw this legislation and quit attacking First Nations rights."

According to the AFN, Bill C-7 infringes on Aboriginal and Treaty rights, and rather than being about governance, entrenches the colonial Indian Act and creates a maze of new restrictive rules and regulations. The national chief says that Bill C-7 is "only about off-loading federal obligations and liabilities on to First Nations. Rather than negotiate lasting solutions, Bill C-7 is being imposed on First Nations over their objections." Bill C-7 was sent to the Standing Committee after first reading, as this supposedly would allow for a broader discussion on the scope and nature of the legislation. Generally, Bills are sent to Committee after second reading and presentations focus on specific amendments as opposed to an examination of the fundamental nature of the legislation.

Chief Coon Come said, "The Government's current efforts to stifle debate fly in the face of comments made by Minister of Indian Affairs Robert Nault in

Question Period on April 1, 2003, when he said: We did send the bill to committee before second reading to give committee members plenty of time to look at it in detail. The Government's motion to limit debate is not consistent with this statement."

"We are disappointed but not surprised by the Committee's actions," said the National Chief. "This just repeats the earlier sham this past fall where Bill C-6 was rammed through the House. Many First Nations witnesses who asked to appear before the Committee

were refused, and there was limited debate by the Committee itself. The same is true of the initial consultations on the Governance Act, where anonymous Internet submissions and calls to a 1-800 line were considered consultations. This government does not want real discussions, it wants a rubber-stamp. This is an arrogant abuse of democracy and the Committee process."

AFN Acting Chief Charles Fox was joined by BQ MP Yvan Loubier (a member of the

Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs and BQ Critic for Aboriginal Affairs), NDP MP Pat Martin (a Standing Committee member and NDP Caucus Critic for Aboriginal Affairs) and Grand Chief Margaret Swan of Manitoba's Southern Chiefs Organization at a press conference in Ottawa to expose the Liberal government's undemocratic, secretive tactics in trying to force Bill C-7 (the so-called First Nations Governance Act) through the Parliamentary Committee process.

"What we've been seeing the last few days can only be described as the tyranny of the majority," said Acting National Chief Fox. "Liberal members of the Standing Committee have been insisting on closed door meetings, using procedural tricks to cut-off legitimate debate, physically threatening Committee

Continued on Page 31

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Auditor General Highlights housing crisis

"In her latest report, Auditor General Sheila Fraser agreed with what First Nations have been saying for years -- the federal government has not been doing a very good job with its financial duties and obligations," said Assembly of First Nations Acting National Chief Charles Fox. "In fact, this government's continued legacy of neglect is directly responsible for our present Third World living conditions."

"Our housing and health needs have been poorly serviced by the federal government," said acting National Chief Fox. "In fact, sometimes as little as 20 per cent of the core funding for programs ends up at the First Nations level. The rest is eaten up by bureaucratic waste, red tape, and servicing federal departmental debt."

"The Auditor General has pointed out that our housing crisis will only worsen in the years to come unless immediate action is taken to streamline program structure and delivery," said acting National Chief Fox. "Our health will only worsen in the years to come because so many homes contain mold and are overcrowded, resulting in breeding grounds for contagious diseases. The health of our growing population is being put at risk on a daily basis."

In the AFN pre-budget submission last year to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Finance, our number one concern and largest request was \$2.3 billion to immediately address the housing crisis. The 2003 federal budget completely ignored that request. In fact, our pre-budget requests on housing have been ignored since 1999."

First Nations communities across Canada are facing a critical shortage of housing for their young and growing populations, even though federal agencies have spent \$3.8-billion to build or renovate reserve homes since 1993, the Auditor-General warned.

In her spring report to Parliament, Fraser blamed both the federal government and Aboriginal leaders for the crisis, saying both sides must agree on their responsibilities and get to work quickly.

"Many First Nations are facing a housing crisis. Unless action is taken quickly, the already unacceptable housing conditions are only going to get worse, with population growth on reserves that is twice the Canadian average," Ms. Fraser said. Aboriginal communities are struggling with a shortage of 8,500 housing units. Worse, almost half the 89,000 reserve homes that existed in 2001 need significant upgrades and repairs, auditors found.

Ms. Fraser forecast that 4,500 new Native family households will be formed every year for the next 10 years, but she added that current federal funding will pay for only 2,600 new homes and renovations/repairs to 3,300 homes per year. "The current level of investment by all parties is insufficient for many First Nations to sustain improvements and keep pace with the demand over the long term," Ms. Fraser said.

Substandard construction, poor building-inspection controls and the resulting toxic moulds that have emerged over the years in many badly built, poorly ventilated Native homes have only exacerbated the housing crunch, she added. Ms. Fraser said one of the biggest problems is that Parliament has an incomplete picture of reserve housing and MPs do not know what is being achieved with taxpayers' money.

Federal government agencies have neither set clear objectives in their efforts to help alleviate the crisis nor a time frame in which to achieve them, she said.

The Auditor-General noted Native communities and Indian and Northern Affairs officials both say they cannot fully implement housing plans because of insufficient resources. However, she questioned those assertions, saying accountable enough about how money allocated to improve housing is really spent.

"Present and past AFN leadership have been saying over the years that First Nations must have direct control over the development and delivery of services such as health and housing," noted acting National Chief Fox. "This is the only way we will be able to overcome our Third World conditions. We are tired of being treated as wards of the state. We are tired of being insulted by

neither side is being money allocated to

an inefficient and ineffective government that continually loses track of billions of dollars."

"Our people have suffered too long at the hands of government incompetence. We need to take control of our future, for the sake of our children."



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Second generation lawsuits permitted says court

by John Copley

Ontario's highest court has ruled that children of residential school survivors can go ahead with lawsuits against the Canadian government for damages that occurred as a result of the abusive situations their parents, most of them young children at the time, endured after being removed from their families and forced into the now extinct school system. The schools, created by government and administered by various Christian groups, including the Anglican, Roman Catholic, Presbyterian and United Churches, operated for more than 100 years as part of a misguided plan to integrate Native Canadian children into mainstream society, a plan of action that the court apparently sees now as one that was both ill-conceived and poorly managed.

In their ruling, three judges with the Ontario Court of Appeal, Justice Jean-Marc Labrosse, Madam Justice Louise Charron and Madam Justice Eileen Gillese, determined that the argument presented by the Crown to prevent second generation law suits contradicted Canadian law.

In the ruling, known as the Bonaparte Decision, Judge Labrosse, said the "Crown submits that the law has always distinguished between an unborn child and a child after birth. It is the Crown's position that the secondary plaintiffs are asking the court to ignore this distinction and to take a further step in recognizing a duty of care owed to future generations of children not yet conceived."

The Ontario Court of Appeals overruled a decision

by a lower court judge who earlier threw the case out, citing that it was "plain and obvious" that government didn't have to pay for people who weren't even born when the alleged abuse occurred. The 56 original plaintiffs were suing on behalf of others suffered while they and/or their parents attended one of two residential schools that operated near the community of Spanish, Ontario from 1934 to 1960. Among their allegations were complaints of physical abuse, forcible and illegal confinement, sexual abuse, emotional and mental abuse, forced labour, negligence and breaching fiduciary responsibility. The Bonaparte Decision, which is expected to see thousands more law suits join the thousands already before the courts, includes the 189 secondary plaintiffs affected by the Appeals Court decision.

Joseph Griffiths, a lawyer for the plaintiffs, told media that this latest decision, though he expects it to be appealed, "sets an important precedent," and one that will make it easier for the several thousand litigants participating in a national class-action suit. Griffiths, who along with counterpart Russell Kronick, QC, represented the 56 original and 189 secondary plaintiffs, told media that their case was based on the fact that "the children of the residential school students suffered their own type of harm."

Griffiths said that "in order to have a cause of action, you normally have to suffer harm firsthand. The Court of Appeal has recognized that the injuries suffered here are historical. I think this is novel in its entirety. We were unable to find any cited cases in which a policy has this sort of effect on future generations."

And that's why government it is likely to appeal the Appeal Court's decision. Unlike many decisions that are made by the Supreme Court and never followed through or recognized by government, this decision will prove harder to manipulate because of the thousands of cases already before the courts in various

provinces including Alberta, B.C., Saskatchewan, Ontario, Quebec and the Maritimes.

The Toronto-based law firm, Thomson/Rogers, is coordinating a bevy of lawyers representing more than about 4,000 Aboriginal claimants that have already filed a class action suit against the federal government, alleging responsibility for the physical, mental, emotional and cultural abuse suffered by school survivors and their families.

"This decision," assured Thomson/Rogers lawyer, Darcy Merkur, "will help the (\$12 billion) National Class Action (now) being advanced by a group of law firms."

The 3-0 ruling by the Ontario Court of Appeal was a severe set-back for government lawyers who argued that the law doesn't recognize the right of children not born when injustices occurred, to sue for damages. If the decision is not appealed or the appeal is lost, a new or revised law will be added to Canada's judicial system.

All three Appeals Court justices ignored government warnings that predicted that an onslaught of cases would emerge from the children (and grandchildren) of the nearly 17,000 Aboriginal children who attended the residential schools before they finally closed for good in the mid 1970s.

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Metis await supreme court decision

by John Copley

Canada's Metis people have been fighting for recognition of their Aboriginal rights for well over a century, despite the fact that they were affirmed in the Constitution more than two decades ago. But the Metis National Council (MNC), the national organization that represents the country's estimated 300,000 Metis citizens, says that struggle could soon come to an end - providing the Supreme Court of Canada does the right thing and goes along with recent arguments made on behalf of Canada's Metis during two historic hearings in Ottawa. The two court cases in question, Regina vs Powley and Regina vs Blais, took place on March 17 and 18, respectively. Though each case addressed a different issue and dealt with different people, a court decision in favour of the applicants could see substantial benefits for all of Canada's Metis.

MNC Interim President Audrey Poiras said the arguments offered by the trio of Metis lawyers who handled the cases were brilliantly articulated and thoroughly presented. She praised their efforts and put their participation into perspective.

"It gives us great pride within the Metis Nation to have a team of Metis lawyers leading these cases," she said. "This is part of who we are as Metis people; we've always depended on our own."

After the final case had been heard, Poiras, who is also the elected president of the Metis Nation of Alberta Association, offered a predecision.

"Following these historic proceedings," she commented to media, "it is my belief that the case put forward by our Metis lawyers is a strong one and the Supreme Court will make a decision that respects our Aboriginal rights."

The first case to be heard involved 54 year old, Steve Powley, and his son Roddy, who were arrested in southern Ontario in 1993 for hunting moose without having obtained a license to do so. This case will, in part, help to determine whether or not Sault Ste. Marie's Metis community is authorized to hunt via the terms designated under Canada's Aboriginal hunting rights principles. The case is also expected to help establish a precedence that other Metis communities will have to meet if they also wish to establish the right to hunt without having to obtain a permit.

The second case involves 53 year old Ernest Blais, a Manitoba Metis who was arrested in 1994 for hunting without a permit. Blais, who continues to hunt when his family is in need of food, says he and other Manitoba Metis are willing to continue their acts of civil disobedience. His case will help to determine whether or not the Metis in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta were considered as Indians when the Natural Resources Transfer Act was initiated in 1930. If the Supreme Court decides in their favour, Metis across the Prairie Provinces would be subject to the same rules as the First Nation people who also reside in the Prairies.

Just days before the two cases were heard by the Supreme Court, marking the first time in history that Canada's highest court has heard important and possibly precedent-setting cases involving Metis rights, Tony Belcourt, one of the country's most noted Metis politicians and spokespersons, told media that the

court cases were the most important ones the Metis have faced since the trial of Louis Riel more than 114 years ago.

"Our Nation is older than this country," Belcourt reminded media. "We are recognized in the Constitution along with our treaty and Aboriginal rights, yet at the same time our most basic right to hunt and fish for food is denied."

Belcourt and other prominent Native leaders have wondered out loud recently why the onus should be on them to spend the hefty legal fees that accompany the lawsuits launched to challenge government for rights the Metis have already established.

MNC Vice President Clem Charrier, also a member of the organization's legal team, said court action was a last resort but one that could not be avoided.

"This is not what we wanted to do," he told media, "but it's been more than 20 years since the Metis' Aboriginal rights were affirmed in the Constitution and still governments refuse to sit down with us and negotiate the nature of those rights."

Charrier says if the Metis hadn't stood up and protected themselves by pursuing a legal decision, there would be no one to stand up for Canada's Constitution.

Poiras agreed. She told media that the court action was "a significant step in our ongoing work to advance Metis rights and to continue to strengthen the Metis Nation. To have these cases heard by the highest court in the land represents another chapter in our history; another story about how our people stood up to the governments of Canada and said, 'this is who we are and these are our rights.'"

Government lawyers have chosen to defend their clients' lack of action and commitment by using the usual "let's frighten the public and get them on our side" defense and argued that if one or both of the cases should be legitimized, it would create enormous benefits for the Metis, but could create even bigger losses for industries that are not traditionally operated by Aboriginals.

Lawyer Tim Danson, addressing the court on behalf of the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters, said that expanded rights for Metis will "have a very negative impact on sustaining wildlife populations." Then he got to the crux of his argument by stating that billions of dollars in tourism and other economic industries would put the country in jeopardy. He also

warned about the disintegration of social harmony between races in Canada.

A lawyer for the province of Ontario, Lori Sterling, who was also backed by the Attorney Generals of seven other provinces, tried comparing Canada to other nations when she told the Supreme Court that "no other country in the entire world provides constitutional rights for persons of mixed ancestry." She said that the word "Aboriginal" means "from the beginning" - and stated that the Metis do not qualify as they came after the arrival of the European settlers.

Sterling is obviously oblivious of the fact that Metis rights are already entrenched in the Constitution and that the prevailing argument deals with government's lack of action and poor record when it comes to dealing with Metis issues. She also appears unaware that when those uninvited settlers first made their way to Canada some four hundred years ago, they had an immediate and irrefutable part in helping to create Canada's first Metis citizens - and those relationships did not always come about through mutual agreement.

Neither Sterling nor any other government lawyer bothered to point out that government also fails miserably when it comes to honest and open negotiations with First Nations citizens. They also failed to mention that despite numerous Supreme Court decisions involving Aboriginal rights and Aboriginal people in Canada over the past several decades, the government sits on its thumbs and fails to act on those decisions.

Section 35 of the Canadian Constitution states that the "existing Aboriginal and treaty rights of the Aboriginal peoples of Canada are hereby recognized and affirmed. In this Act, 'Aboriginal peoples of Canada' includes the Indian, Inuit and Metis peoples of Canada."

End of argument. The question is, can the Supreme Court understand plain English. It seems that the federal, and many provincial governments, can not.



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Tripartite Partnership Agreement signed

The Saskatchewan Union of Nurses (SUN) and the Saskatchewan Association of Health Organizations (SAHO) recently signed the 41st partnership agreement with the province's Aboriginal Employment Development Program (AEDP).

The tripartite agreement, between SUN, SAHO and the Government of Saskatchewan, is geared toward the inclusion of Aboriginal people in the workplace.

"Our goal as a government is to ensure that Aboriginal people have a bright future through education, employment and business," Aboriginal Affairs Minister Eldon Lautermilch said. "Partnerships such as this one being signed between SUN, SAHO and the Saskatchewan Government is an excellent step toward our shared goal that Aboriginal people participate fully in the social and economic fabric of our province."

The AEDP strives to build a workforce in Saskatchewan where Aboriginal people compete for jobs based on their skills and qualifications, and where they have representation at all occupational levels in proportion to their population numbers in the province.

"The Saskatchewan Union of Nurses is honoured to be a partner in this agreement being signed

today," President of SUN, Rosalee Longmoore said. "We believe it is important to have a workforce that is representative of the Aboriginal population and we will work with our partners to attain this."

"SAHO is committed to working in partnership with government and union members to achieve a representative workforce," SAHO Board Chair Alex Taylor said. "This partnership with SUN will assist in ensuring the successful integration of Aboriginal people into health sector professions and help us prepare our workforce for the future."

Through the AEDP partnerships, employers have successfully hired more than 1,500 qualified Aboriginal people.



Stonechild inquiry set for the September

A public inquiry into the death of an Aboriginal teenager in Saskatoon is set to begin this fall. Neil Stonechild was found frozen to death 12 years ago on the outskirts of the city. Saskatoon police originally ruled the death accidental. But, an RCMP task force reopened the case three years ago following the deaths

Saskatchewan bands launch suit against Ottawa

Eight First Nations bands are suing the federal government on behalf of members of their bands who, as of April 1, saw the level of their post-secondary funding reduced. In a statement of claim filed earlier last month the chiefs from Day Star, Lueky Man, Ocean Man, Peepeekis, Pheasant Rump Nakota, Star Blanket, White Bear, and Wood Mountain First Nations are seeking a court declaration stating the federal government can't unilaterally and arbitrarily reduce the post-secondary funding provided to First Nations.

Province and Haida partner on land use planning

The B.C. government and the Haida Nation have signed a framework agreement to co-manage land use planning on Haida Gwaii/Queen Charlotte Islands.

"We are bringing forward a planning process that finally engages the people of Haida Gwaii and respects our culture," said Council of the Haida Nation President Guujaaw. "Our goal is to create a balanced approach to land use that incorporates the values of the people who live here."

The agreement is to co-develop a land-use plan that is ecosystem-based, protects the environment, maintains spiritual and cultural values, and fosters community well-being while it opens up economic opportunities to all people of Haida Gwaii/Queen Charlotte Islands.

The provincial government has also designated the Duu Guusd area on Haida Gwaii/Queen Charlotte Islands under the Forest Act to protect it from logging during the planning process. The 150,000-hectare Duu Guusd area is of special significance to the Haida Nation, which declared it a Haida Tribal Park in 1981.

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NAAF celebrates its 10th Anniversary

Fourteen of Canada's most powerful Aboriginal role models were honoured before a sold-out crowd, and a stellar group of talented artists performed at the National Aboriginal Achievement Awards celebrating its 10th anniversary last month at the National Arts Centre in Ottawa. Actor/singer Tom Jackson, who hosted the very first National Aboriginal Achievement Awards in 1994, returned to host the evening's celebrations. The night of honours featured performances by Canada's top Aboriginal artists, set against a powerful set designed by Mohawk conductor, executive producer and founder of the awards, John Kim Bell.

Much sought after musician, songwriter, creative executive and producer Robbie Robertson not only received the 2003 Lifetime Achievement Award but also performed *Making A Noise* with Rita Coolidge, Jackie Bird and Sadie Buck.

The line-up also included the spectacular opening *Wildside*, performed by singer/songwriter and percussionist Sarah Saint. Inuk singer Susan Aglukark, a past recipient, sang her song *Crazy Water Dance*. Up-and-coming sopranos Melody Mercedi and Mavis Callihoo performed *The Flower Duet* from the opera *Lakmé* along with contemporary dancer Santee Smith.

The evening also included the comedy of Don Burnstick as well as a special performance of *Dead Dog Café* featuring Edna Rain, Floyd Favel and Tom King, the 2003 award recipient for Arts and Culture. Also included was a retrospective of the first nine Awards galas, featuring a performance by Shania Twain and special congratulations from Peter Mansbridge, David Suzuki, and other eminent Canadians.

In addition, 14 courageous men and women received their awards before a sold-out crowd. Interspersed between the sensational performances,

the glittering evening featured video vignettes of the lives and accomplishments of this year's 14 achievers and retrospective videos of the past ten years.

"This year's recipients are a tremendous group," said John Kim Bell, founder and president of the National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation. "It is hard to believe that 10 years have passed since Bill Reid received the first lifetime achievement award on the stage of the National Arts Centre and since that time 126 individuals have been recognized for their contributions to the betterment of life in Aboriginal communities and the rest of the country."

The 2003 National Aboriginal Achievement Award recipients are a notable group:

- Saskatchewan Métis master fiddler, John Arcand;
- Winnipeg physician and Chair of the United Way, Dr. Judith Bartlett;
- Alberta oil and pipeline expert, Mel E. Benson;
- University of Victoria legal scholar, John Borrows;
- Regina based professional engineer and entrepreneur, Gary Bosgood;
- Saskatoon engineering student, athlete, actor and community volunteer Matthew Dunn - this year's youth recipient and aspiring astronaut;
- Ontario based writer of four best-selling novels, the creative force behind *Dead Dog Café* and numerous television scripts, Thomas King;
- Northerner Edward Lennie the creator of the Northern Games;

- University of Lethbridge and Harvard lecturer, Leroy Little Bear;
- B.C. environmentalist and fishery conservationist, Chief Simon Lucas;
- B.C. Chief Sophie Pierre, the builder of the St. Eugene Mission resort;
- Winnipeg based community worker and language protector, Mary Richard;
- The lifetime achievement award recipient - rock legend Robbie Robertson;
- Vancouver based physician and AIDS researcher and advocate, Dr. Jay Wortman.

The awards are a special project of the National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation, a national charity established in 1985 by John Kim Bell. The Foundation provides financial assistance to Aboriginal students to realize their educational goals and dreams with a record \$2 million in individual scholarships awarded to students this year and \$14 million since inception. The Foundation organizes two career fairs annually to introduce grades 9-12 students to potential careers. This year NAAF launched Taking Pulse a new program to generate greater participation of Aboriginal people into the Canadian workforce.



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Spiritual perspectives on war and peace

by Kenneth Cohen

I am a Jewish American man who lives in a log cabin at 9,000 feet elevation in the Rocky Mountains of Colorado. Though I am not Indian by blood, I am an Earth Person, trained by traditional elders of several indigenous nations. I would like to share with you my perspective on America's wars on terrorism and Iraq.

An elder said that the attack on the World Trade Center was an attack on Turtle Island. I agree. New York City is Lenape territory, and in spite of the steel and concrete, the old spirits are still present, and the land is still sacred. Mohawk steel workers helped to build the towers, and Native Americans were among the casualties on 9/11. One of my mentors, an Innu elder, lost a relative in the attack. Citizens of many nations lost their lives, and good hearted people mourn them. Native American tribes contributed prayers, time, equipment, and money in the relief efforts. Many Euro-Americans remain unaware of the response of patriotic Native Americans who have always defended their country, no matter what government was in power. Native Americans have the highest percentage of military enrollment of any ethnic group in the United States. Ten percent of their population, 44,521 people, fought in the second world war, and even more served in Vietnam. They are fighting now in Iraq.

I do not believe that this is a just war, and there is no Native American moral imperative or precedent for a preemptive strike. The Peacemaker of the Haudenosaunee (Iroquois Confederacy), told the people to bury their weapons of war beneath the Great Tree of Peace. An eagle perches on the top of the tree, and if there is a threat to the land and life of the Confederacy, the citizens have the right to defend themselves. There is no evidence that, today, such a threat has been made. The United States is, rather, the aggressor.

Washington is a far more "windy city" than Chicago. The political winds blow this way and that,

and President Bush is the source of most of the hot air. Bush's motives for ordering "Operation Iraqi Freedom" are, to put it mildly, muddled. Disarm Iraq? Depose Hussein? Seek revenge for Hussein's attempts on his father's life? Let's look at each.

Disarm Iraq? United Nations weapons inspectors were in the process of disarming Iraq, and their continued presence would have assured that no weapons of mass destruction could be developed or deployed. With inspectors in Iraq, the discovery of weapons would have met with world-wide, multilateral, immediate response. Also, I find it odd that popular news media seems to ignore the history of Iraqi weapons: Throughout the Reagan administration, the United States shared military intelligence with Iraq and allowed weapons dealers to sell conventional weapons. From 1985-89, the U.S. also sold Iraq various biological weapons, including anthrax, botulinum, E. Coli, and Histoplasma Capsulatum, which attacks the brain, lungs, and heart. In an editorial in *News from Indian Country*, author and activist Winona LaDuke says that of course the U.S. knows that Iraq has or has had biological weapons—because we saved the receipts!

Depose Hussein? Don't get me wrong. I am no fan of Saddam Hussein. He gasses his own people and destroys not only oil reserves but marine life in the Gulf without second thought. Yet, considering the long and violent history of the Middle East, I am not certain that, after Hussein is gone, he will not "incarnate" again. It seems to me that we are dealing with a six-headed monster: Bush-Cheney-Hussein-Bin Laden-Sharon-Arafat, all of whom have the same problem—an inability to face their own shadow side. They point their fingers at other people, not looking where the other three fingers are pointing. Humility is not the strong point of this monster. I do not feel that violence was the way tooust Hussein. Call me naive, but I believe that the U.S. could have used its political and economic muscle to foster an internal revolution by the Iraqi people.

Seek Revenge? Bush admitted to a news broadcaster that he wanted to get Hussein because Hussein had tried to kill his father. When I heard this, I was shocked that there was not an immediate resolution for impeachment. Let's imagine that I am called for jury duty. The defense attorney asks me if I know the defendant. I say, "Well, we never met, but I know that he tried to assassinate my father." I would be dismissed immediately. I missed immediately. I would be deemed incapable of making an impartial decision. Some analysts excuse Bush's "cowboy politics." But he is no cowboy. Hussein challenged Bush to a debate that would be broadcast throughout the world. He even suggested American T.V. news anchor Dan Rather as the moderator. Bush refused. Instead, he sent the army. I say, let Bush fight his own battle of revenge. Put him and Hussein in the desert, each with a 45, and let them draw!

Of course, it's too late for that, and I am ambivalent about the best exit strategy. We may need to win the war after all, since I cannot see American soldiers retreating with their tails between their legs. Too many brave men and women have died already. At this point, I am praying for a speedy end to the battle, with minimum loss of life, and a democratic, compassionate, and wise government for the Iraqi people. I also pray that America realize what a grim victory this will be and that we use the Iraqi war to spark debate about colonialism and imperialism.

On a global scale, I pray that the U.S. and other countries commit themselves to lessening the need for oil and increasing their reliance on renewable resources. It is ironic that a country that behaves like an environmental terrorist is waging a war on terrorism. In environmental policy, the U.S. has become a rogue nation. (In the latest assault, the United States Department of Defense has proposed the "Readiness and Range Preservation Initiative" to exempt the military from virtually all environmental protection laws, including the Clean Air Act, the Marine Mammal Protection Act, the Superfund Law, the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, and parts of the Endangered Species Act. The exemption would allow solid waste and chemical dumping in groundwater and the burning of weapons in open air pits. It would also destroy wildlife habitat—all in the interest of national security. Hmm. Doesn't the nation include more than two-leggeds? What about dolphin security? Bear security? Ant security?)

The Iraqi War has made me think about the psychological and spiritual reasons for war in general:

- Soul Loss. People today lack self-awareness, sensitivity to nature, sense of purpose, and love—the emotion that naturally results from a feeling of connection to life.
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Continued on Page 10



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BOOK LAUNCH

To honour his First Nation relatives Kenneth Cohen will be launching his new Random House book release *Honouring the Medicine: The Essential Guide to Native American Healing* with a lecture and signing at McNally Robinson Bookstore in Saskatoon on June 12 at 7:30 p.m. Cohen will discuss the First Nations concept of "medicine," how discovering and honoring one's gifts leads to a state of health and harmony. He will also explore the role of drumming, song, and prayer in awakening the spirit. Information will be presented from traditional and modern perspectives, encouraging respectful dialogue between indigenous and western science. Cohen will also share his political views—we can only preserve these traditions by protecting the sovereignty, way of life, and lands of original peoples. At the end of the talk, he will sign copies of his new book.

For more information contact McNally Robinson Bookstore 3130 - 8th Street, Saskatoon or phone (306) 955-3599.

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Contaminated water results in state of emergency at Cat Lake First Nation

Residents of the Cat Lake First Nation, in northwestern Ontario, are living in a state of emergency due to contaminated drinking water that has resulted in an outbreak of gastroenteritis.

"This is an extremely serious situation. Lives are at risk," said Assembly of First Nations Acting National Chief Charles Fox (National Chief Matthew Coon Come is currently in Europe speaking about First Nations' Third World conditions). "Unfortunately, this is nothing new since any number of First Nations across this country are potential Walkerton disasters (102 First Nations are currently under boil water advisories).

"What makes this situation new is that Health Canada closed its nursing station in Cat Lake last week and evacuated the medical staff after the building and surrounding residences were flooded with raw sewage," noted acting National Chief Fox.

"The community's water and sewage treatment systems have had recurring malfunctions over the years."

The situation at Cat Lake First Nation has gone from bad to worse. Cat Lake's water plant has been rated "high risk" by Indian and Northern Affairs since March, 2001. There has been a Health Canada boil water advisory for over two years. Since October, 2002, Cat Lake Chief Wilfred Wesley has

sent letters of appeal to both Indian and Northern Affairs and Minister Robert Nault, who is also the local MP. He has received no reply.

This past Friday, April 4, the Cat Lake First Nation declared a state of emergency after the community's "flawed" water and sewer system suffered a complete shutdown. "Health Canada has stated that the public health implications are extremely serious," said acting National Chief Fox. "With warmer weather later this week, the spring runoffs will spread the raw sewage throughout the community and into the lake.

"We need immediate action to correct this intolerable and inhumane situation. If our government won't help, perhaps we should appeal for humanitarian aid from the United Nations."



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Letter to the Editor

Justice denied in Saskatoon

by Eugene H. Papin Sr.

The article that was printed in your newspaper last month entitled "Saskatoon Cops Lose Appeal", both sickens me and saddens me. Why did these two ex-police officers only receive five months of their sentences and why are they being allowed to obtain a transfer to a halfway house?

Why are these two ex-police officers disappointed by the Appeal Court's decision? After what they did to those men and the one who survived why should anybody be concerned for their safety? Munson and Hatcher (the ex-police officers) should not be allowed to be in protective custody. They should get what they deserve. How would they feel if an officer did to them what they did to those poor defenseless people? Yet their lawyers say that Munson and Hatcher did not get a fair deal from the trial judge.

They tried to argue that these two cops mistakenly thought Darrell Night wanted to be left out in the cold? Tell me another one! This is what goes on every day (police brutality) against Native people. If it were a white man would they do the same thing? I don't think so.

I highly commend Darrell Night for standing up for his rights - not only as a human being but for all Aboriginal people who are being persecuted by the police.

Hats off to the Saskatchewan Indian Nations (FSIN) and others who helped to initiate this R.C.M.P. investigation.

Too many of our Aboriginal people are being cheated, mistreated, prejudiced against, being forced to subject to police brutality. Too many police are getting away with police brutality against the Native people and it's high time that we people band together and speak out against these horrific crimes.

The Saskatchewan R.C.M.P. are trying to cover up for themselves. Lying about what's happening so they can escape being charged by the judicial system. It's sickening, saddening and deplorable that this is happening.

How can Munson and Hatcher deny any involvement in the deaths of Wegner and

Naistus when they were both working the night they died? This to me is a cover up again to escape being charged by the judicial system. Lies, lies, lies!

How can they say there was no police involvement the night Naistus died? He didn't ask to be dumped near a power plant and he didn't choose to freeze to death.

I agree with Vice-Chief of the Federation of Saskatchewan Indians, Chief Lawrence Joseph that the judicial system severely needs to be changed. Aboriginal people have rights too! Not just the white man.

I also totally agree with Darrell Night that he did not want to have the two ex-officers participating in a traditional Aboriginal sentencing circle. Darrell Night was humiliated, abused, misused, misunderstood and treated horrifically by these ex-cops.

In your article you state at the end, it puts an end to the process. What process?

That Aboriginal people are all right, fine and dandy? I don't think so. These people are proud people, they have rights,

feelings and constitutional rights too.

I, Eugene H. Papin Sr., am an Aboriginal Cultural Healer. I am also an advocate for my Elders. I participated in a video about police brutality that is being used in workshops and in rehabilitation centres as well. The video is called "Police Brutality".

I am a survivor from the Residential School System. I started committing crimes that I did not want to commit. But I was so devastated by what they did to me. I had to go out and seek help from an Elder in order to heal all the hurt and pain that I was carrying inside of myself.

Now, I am a changed person. It took five years for me to overcome all the hurt and pain that I suffered.

I went through workshops and became a court worker, in part to help the many people who were charged for things they were never guilty of.

I later became an addictions counsellor and educated myself by taking many different workshops to overcome the horrific crimes that were committed to me in the Residential School System. The judge did not listen to me about the police assaulting me. Still they sentenced me to the jail system.

The judicial system needs to be changed dramatically. There are too many judges that sentence people without really hearing the person who is being sentenced and are quick to pass sentences on these poor people who are being prosecuted without really listening to their side of the story.



By Christopher Harvey Chamberlain M.M.H.

Best wishes for a healthy and prosperous Spring season

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by Eric MacInnis, M.Ed.

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AutoSkill

New training facility to be built at Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation

Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation recently announced plans to construct a new state-of-the-art training facility and business incubator on-reserve. The Atoskiwin Training and Employment Centre of Excellence will provide First Nations people with the entrepreneurial and trades skills needed to take full advantage of opportunities created by extensive hydro development and other projects that will be taking place in northern Manitoba over the next 20 years. The operations of the Centre will focus on hydro development in the immediate future. The scope of its activities will eventually extend into other areas as well. The new facility will benefit Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation members and other First Nations communities located nearby.

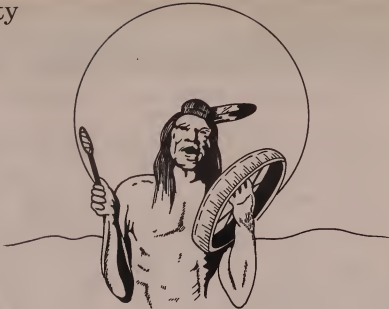
"The creation of the new Atoskiwin Training and Employment Centre of Excellence will provide our people with unprecedented access to quality training and educational opportunities," said Chief Jerry Primrose. "It is an exciting time for us and the future looks bright. I am filled with pride when I think of the generations that will directly benefit from this endeavour now and in the future. The Centre will help us move ahead in new and innovative ways that will increase and expand our economic base. It is key to our prosperity and will build a strong foundation for our youth."

"The Government of Canada is thrilled to support the construction of this incredible new facility," said INAC Minister Robert Nault. "It will provide First Nation workers with better access to the practical skills and training required to fully participate in today's modern economy. It is an excellent example of partnership and capacity building - I am confident that the Centre will live up to its name. Access to a facility such as this is a crucial step toward ensuring long-

term sustainability and economic self-sufficiency."

Training programs offered by the Centre will include: literacy and upgrading; security and catering; labour and rebar work; skilled trades; heavy equipment operating; truck driving; clerical skills; and women in trades and technology. Business support services planned also include: accounting; business plan writing; computer services; graphic design; market analysis; human resource support; legal assistance; after-care services and mentoring.

The Atoskiwin Training and Employment Centre of Excellence is expected to create 19 full-time positions for its day-to-day operations. An additional 35 full-time positions will be needed for the construction of the actual infrastructure.



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Folsom launches new Institute of Bible Counselling

Fountain Of Life School Of Ministry is pleased to announce the establishment of the first "Canadian First Nations Institute Of Biblical Counselling". The new division will be directed by a First Nations/Metis advisory Board and the faculty will be pre-dominant by First Nations/Metis.

The first vocational training program, approved in principle by Saskatchewan Learning, through this newly created Institute is called "Biblical/Pastoral Counselling Specialist Diploma". This 52-week highly specialized training program will offer 26 weeks of theoretical instruction to be followed by 26 weeks of Biblical/pastoral counselling under clinical supervision.

The new program has received strong endorsements from a variety of Christian ministries and denominational groups including:

- The International College of Biblical Counselling in Denver, Colorado
- Restor... Nations, an international Christian organization in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan.
- Open Bible Faith Fellowship of Canada, St. Catharines, Ontario
- Canadian Training Institute, Toronto, Ontario
- Apostolic Church Of Pentecost of Canada, Calgary, Alberta

Students accepted into the new program will be introduced to and trained in a number of Biblical/pastoral counselling techniques and methods. Class topics, among others, include:

- Sound thinking for uncertain times
- In pursuit of maturity
- Prayer (and altar) counselling
- Marriage enrichment counselling
- Pastoral counselling - levels I & II
- Crisis proof living and how to handle stress from a Biblical perspective
- Personality studies
- Native Family Studies
- Counselling for First Nations Spiritual Leadership

FOLSOM believes that this new division and its first vocational training program will be quite popular, particularly for First Nations students who want to prepare themselves to work appropriately with all of the social/health/justice problems within their own communities - problems associated with family violence, suicide, poverty, AIDS/HIV, sexual abuse in residential schools, a variety of negative dependencies, FAS/FAE and other alcohol related disorders, etc.

Biblical/Pastoral Counselling Specialists would be able to effectively provide counselling and education in Christian living, solidly founded in Christian Biblical teachings from a non-denominational perspective. Graduates will also be able to identify situations which would not be in their assigned domain of counselling (Christian/Biblical) and consequently appropriate referral systems would be taught and worked out.



Rey oo

More information about the first Canadian First Nations Institute Of Biblical Counselling and its first program "Biblical/Pastoral Counselling Specialist Diploma" can be obtained by calling 306-764-9075 or fax 306-764-2450 or email at info@folsom.sk.ca or through their web site at www.folsom.sk.ca

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CHIP Hospitality awards tourism scholarships

Three students from the prairies were among six Aboriginal students from across Canada that were awarded scholarships from CHIP Hospitality to help them further their studies towards a career in tourism or a related field. Each student will receive a \$2000 scholarship from CHIP Hospitality, as part of the company's partnership with the Foundation for the Advancement of Aboriginal Youth (FAAY).

"CHIP Hospitality is proud to assist Aboriginal youth expand their education and career opportunities," said CHIP Hospitality's President Minaz Ahji.

"We believe this scholarship program is an important step towards helping them develop the knowledge and skills necessary in Canada's growing tourism industry."

Mellina Lahoucan-Massimo: Mellina is a 21-year-old status Cree from the Lubicon Lake First Nation in Alberta in fourth year of a Spanish language and literature program at the University of Alberta in Edmonton. She has been active in her church, studied dance for 10 years and is currently the Aboriginal representative on the City of Edmonton Youth Council. Her professor believes she will be an asset to any organization. Her sponsor says she showed great ability and patience in dealing with children at Sunday school. Mellina would like to work overseas with a humanitarian organization for a year and then return to school for a master's in community development.

Sylvia Gopher: Sylvia is a 40-year-old status Saulteaux from the Saulteaux First Nation in North Battleford, Saskatchewan who is enrolled in a Microsoft Certified Systems Engineer course at Nighthawk Technologies in Hull, Quebec. Sylvia

worked for a number of years as an office manager for Aboriginal organizations in Saskatchewan before going back to school to improve her chances of making a better life for her three children. One of her

instructors says she demonstrates a professional attitude and has been

an asset to her class. Her sponsor says she became a key person in the Aboriginal community in Ottawa/Hull since her arrival last year. Sylvia plans to become an IT consultant and trainer after she graduates.

Michelle Klippenstein: Michelle is an 18-year-old status Ojibway from the Poplar River First Nation in Manitoba who is in her first year at the University of Winnipeg. She is taking a general program in first year while she decides on a major. One of her teachers tells us she is a highly respected member of her class who is responsible, caring and hard working. Her sponsor has, over the years, observed a commendable perseverance from this very ambitious young woman. Michelle spent grade 11 studying in Guatemala and is narrowing her choices of a major to tourism, business or inter-

national development.

themselves for rewarding careers in the Canadian tourism industry."

CCAB is Canada's leading organization dedicated to promoting the full participation of Aboriginal people in the Canadian economy. Established in 1994, FAAY is Canada's oldest general interest scholarship and bursary program for Aboriginal youth. The foundation has awarded almost \$1 million to more than 725 Aboriginal students in all areas of study. CHIP Hospitality joins 10 other leading Canadian and U.S. companies in supporting FAAY's scholarship program. The "CHIP Hospitality - Future Tourism Leaders" scholarship is available to Canadian Aboriginal students enrolled in studies focusing on the hospitality industry at any accredited post-secondary educational institution in Canada.

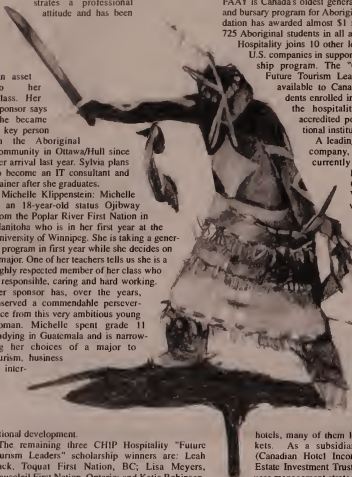
A leading hotel management company, CHIP Hospitality currently manages over 30 hotels and resorts in Canada and Washington State with more than 8,000 rooms. The company manages such franchise brands as Sheraton, Crowne Plaza, Radisson, Delta, Marriott Residence Inn, Four Points by Sheraton, Holiday Inn, Quality, Gouverneur, Best Western, Ramada and Howard Johnson. In addition, CHIP has a number of independent

hotels, many of them leaders in their markets. As a subsidiary of CHIP REIT (Canadian Hotel Income Properties Real Estate Investment Trust), CHIP Hospitality uses management strategies, upgrades, repositioning and franchising to improve the operating performance of the properties within its portfolio to create value for investors and owners. CHIP REIT units trade on the Toronto Stock Exchange under the symbol HOTUN and HOT.d.b. Find out more about FAAY and CCAB programs at www.ccab-canada.com or www.aboriginalbiz.com.

national development.

The remaining three CHIP Hospitality "Future Tourism Leaders" scholarship winners are: Leah Mack, Toquat First Nation, BC; Lisa Meyers, Beausoleil First Nation, Ontario; and Katie Robinson, Squamish First Nation, BC.

"I would like to praise the hard work and dedication of these students and thank CHIP Hospitality for its support of the FAAY family," said Jocelyne Souleuvre, President and CEO of the Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business (CCAB). "These scholarships help Aboriginal students across the country prepare





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ASSETS

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- Ability to work flexible hours


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Sports development as a way to combat social problems

by Malcolm McColl

Community development is the underlying goal for Tony Alexis hosting the Medicine Wheel of Sports Development Conference. The conference will be held May 19th, 20th, and 21st, 2003, at the Fantasyland Hotel, at West Edmonton Mall. "We want to recognize people who overcame obstacles to find success. We also want to honour our father, Dan Alexis, 64, for a lifetime of contributions and years of service to kids and adults."

Tony described his father as a source of great inspiration who promoted culture and sports together. "He has been a powwow organizer, a councillor, and a spiritual leader, and a traditional leader. He's coached hundreds of kids in hockey and baseball. If he ever saw a kid who needed equipment, like a pair of skates or a glove or running shoes, my Dad got the equipment, out of his own pocket. He always was and always will be a man for his community."

Tony said, "My Dad's mother was a widow when my Dad was still a child. He started working for pay at the age of 8. Today he is working for the Capital Health Authority as an Aboriginal Cultural Helper. He holds sweats that are attended by doctors, lawyers, priests, and not to mention youth, and others seeking this spiritual and physical relief."

The conference will advocate sports development as a way to combat social problems in Aboriginal communities. An additional objective is to establish funding streams for underprivileged youth. Four keynote speakers have been recruited to fill a role in the Medicine Wheel format, including the directional spokes representing four basic areas of human development: Emotion, Spirit, Body and Mind.

Henry "Gizmo" Williams will speak on emotional development. Phil Lane, Jr. will speak to spiritual development. Leanna Martens will speak to physical development. And Dr. Randy Gregg will speak to mental development. The agenda for participants will include a number of breakout sessions. The topics include: Careers in sports, Balancing education and sports, Goal setting, Community development programs, Training and conditioning, Athletes and health/anatomy, Evolution of Native athletes in sports, Addictions, Team building, et al.

Tony said, "We will have a session on racism. It's out there, we learn to deal with it, everybody has their

own experiences, but it remains very much an issue. We have to address racism honestly." A gathering of guest speakers will host or moderate or direct the breakout sessions. The format of each session will be up to the presenter, whose expertise will be shared in the workshops that take place during days' one and two. Day three contains the cultural and achievement sections.

The Dan Alexis Sports Development Foundation will present an award for Dedication to Sports Development on the third and final day of the conference (morning only). There will also be a scholarship awarded, and the Aboriginal Athlete of the Year - 2003 named. The conference will be organized to accommodate about 250 - 300 guests. The Fantasyland Hotel has offered special room rates (1-800-737-3783) and the Wingate Inn near the W.E.M. is offering special rates [(780) 443-1000].

For more information or to register, contact Tony Alexis, Conference Coordinator, Dan Alexis Sports Foundation, Medicine Wheel of Sports Development: (780) 967-4435. Fax (780) 967-1097. Email: dasdf@telus.net Write Box 186, Glenevis, Alberta T0E 0X0.

An Educational Conference designed for Community Development! Medicine Wheel of Sports Development Conference Starts Victoria Day May 19, 20 & 21, 2003



WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

- ✓ First Nation Recreation Directors
- ✓ First Nation Educated Directors
- ✓ First Nation Social Development Workers
- ✓ Aboriginal Parents
- ✓ Aboriginal Youth
- ✓ Band Councilors
- ✓ Youth Program Managers
- ✓ Team Managers
- ✓ Coaches & Trainers
- ✓ Teachers (Physical Education)

CONFERENCE OBJECTIVES:

1. To inspire the aboriginal community
2. To provide the aboriginal community with a network of programs and services.
3. To advocate for sports development as a way to combat against alcohol, drug, violence and crime in aboriginal communities.
4. To educate and promote a holistic concept of community development using the Medicine Wheel concept & promoting Sports Development Programs.
5. To raise funds that will provide scholarships, grants, and community services to underprivileged aboriginal youth and children.

CONFERENCE FORMAT:

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS are specialists in their fields and will provide confidential participants with valuable information.

EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

KEYNOTE SPEAKER:

Henry "Gizmo" Williams
Former Edmonton Eskimo
Grey Cup Champion



PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

KEYNOTE SPEAKER:

Leanna Martens
National Fitness Competitor
Certified Personal Fitness Trainer



SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

KEYNOTE SPEAKER:

Phil Lane Jr.
Four Winds Institute
Cultural Facilitator



MENTAL DEVELOPMENT

KEYNOTE SPEAKER:

Dr. Randy Gregg
Edmonton Sports Institute
Former Edmonton Oilers
Stanley Cup Champion



BREAK-AWAY WORKSHOPS / TOPICS INCLUDE:

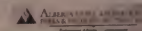
Sport programs and services, dealing with racism, creative, successful teams, basic and elite modeling, parenting, cultural identity, careers in sports, training & conditioning, choosing colleges, post-secondary education, goal setting, and many more!

*WORKSHOP PRESENTERS:

Mika Makiola of Finland - 1st European Coach in Canada Coaching Leanneau Hurricanes (WHL), Lethbridge, Alberta
Noire Dame College (Winnipeg, Saskatchewan)
Alberta Sport, Recreation, Parks and Wildlife Foundation (Edmonton, Alberta)
NBC Camps (Spokane, USA)
University of Alberta, (Edmonton, Alberta)
N.A.I.T. (Edmonton, Alberta)
Others TBA

*Special Guest Speaker's - Successful Aboriginal Athletes

Clotilde Lene-Mary Grey Horses, Track & Field, Berkeley University, California, USA, *Currently Attending
Reggie Cardinal, College Hockey, University of Maine, Maine, USA Graduate, Bachelor's Degree in Science (2)
Andy Fox, Golf & Club Pro, San Diego State University Graduate, Bachelor's Degree in Golf Management
Others TBA *Invitations sent out to various high profile aboriginal athletes



For more information or to register contact:

Dan Alexis Sports Development Foundation
c/o Tony Alexis, Conference Coordinator



Mailing Address:
Box 186, Glenevis, Alberta T0E 0X0
Phone: (780) 967-4435
Fax: (780) 967-1097
Email: dasdf@telus.net

CONFERENCE FEES:

REGISTRATION:

Deadline May 16, 2003 - Registration Fee = \$500.00

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The Dan Alexis Sports Development Foundation is awarding two scholarships during this conference for Achievement in Sports and Dedication to Sports Development in Aboriginal Communities.

*All registrants will be entered to win a scholarship to attend a summer camp in their chosen sport! (winners will be chosen randomly, not by skill.)

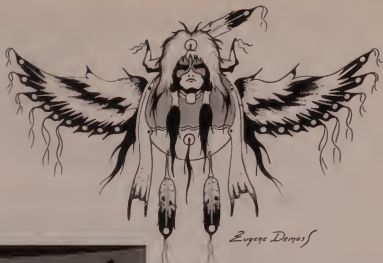
Youth to graduate from aquatic leadership program

Thirteen Aboriginal youth from Edmonton are in the final weeks of a specialized aquatic leadership program to train them to become fully-qualified swim instructors and lifeguards.

The training is part of a unique pilot project developed through the collaborative efforts of Amiskwaciy Academy, the City of Edmonton Services Department, and the Department of Canadian Heritage Urban Multipurpose Aboriginal Youth Centres Initiative.

The Aboriginal Youth Aquatic Leadership Program

combines the cultural teachings and guidance of Aboriginal Elders, with the instruction of water safety and leadership



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Peace Country 6



Mile Zero Days May 31
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Canada Day July 1
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US Independence Day July 4
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Mile Zero Cruisers Summer Cruise July 11-13
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Peace Country Bluegrass Festival ... July 18-20
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Features a range of performers and vendors. Pioneer Park.



skills by experienced City of Edmonton Lifeguard Supervisors. The shared mentoring approach provides a very positive, stable and supportive learning environment for participants to develop their skills and gain valuable work experience. After completion of the program, graduates are encouraged to seek employment at local swimming pools, and serve as role models for the growing urban Aboriginal community.

The program was given the name *Nikanihew* by Cree Elders, which means *one who leads the way*," says Mark Dafeo, Supervisor of Leisure Centres with the City of Edmonton Community Services Department. "The name is reflective of the program's focus, but is also reflective of the strength, commitment and responsibility of the teens involved."

Since the program started in September 2002, the teens have trained intensively in the pool and classroom. Though all participants have made strong improvements in their abilities, many will graduate at different levels of Red Cross and Lifesaving Society certification. It is expected that several participants will achieve the Red Cross Water Safety Instructor award, and even begin teaching swimming lessons as soon as this summer.

The official graduation ceremony for the Aboriginal Youth Aquatic Leadership Program will take place at 4 p.m. on Wednesday, April 30, at Amiskwaciy Academy (101 Airport Road).

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Economic Development

APTN, Taylor George winning team at Signature Awards

"And the winner is... APTN" was a phrase heard many times at this year's Signature Awards for excellence in Manitoba Advertising. Aboriginal Peoples Television Network picked up Signatures for Best TV Made in Manitoba for an Aboriginal Day spot, and Best Original Music for an Aboriginal History piece by composer James Creasey at the gala event March 22nd.

stand up for their convictions," said Peter George, President and Creative Director of Taylor George. "This is the second campaign we've done for them that's caused a bit of a stir. And APTN is OK with that because it generates discussion - in both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal circles. APTN was confident their audience would get the jokes and appreciate the humour. That's what makes them such a great client.

They're not afraid to take risks and they know their audience."

Deanie Kolybabi says she knows an ad is good when it makes her nervous. "And sometimes we know the stuff Taylor George does will make waves, but that's good. Right now APTN is working to create public awareness, so if it takes a little controversy to get noticed, fine," says Kolybabi.

"The Aboriginal images we see in the media are always issue oriented or traditional. What we're doing is highlighting the incredible thing that is Aboriginal humour - that's really the common thread that links all Aboriginal cultures. The fact that some non-Aboriginal people don't get it simply confirms

that we're breaking the mould, and more importantly, we're resonating specifically with our audience."

Taylor George won in the best multi-media campaign category with work for APTN at last year's Signature Awards as well.

"We are so proud to be associated with Taylor George, and especially to have the opportunity to work with their young and very talented Aboriginal Art Director, Brent Morrisseau," says Kolybabi. "It's a good fit."

In addition to their wins for APTN work, Taylor George picked up the prize for Best Insert, Newsletter or Flyer for SAY (Spirit of



"We have this incredibly young team - for many it's their first opportunity in the national broadcast environment - so it's really exciting for them to be acknowledged in this way, among their peers in the industry," said Deanie Kolybabi, APTN Director of Strategic Development and Marketing. "There's a passion, loyalty and enthusiasm at APTN that I've never experienced anywhere else. It's gratifying to have that pay off, to get validation that the quality of our work is truly holding its own against competitive marketing services."

APTN advertising agency, Taylor George, earned three awards for work done on the network's behalf. The agency won Best Radio Single, Best Other Out of Home and the coveted Best Multi-Media Campaign award for work promoting APTN fall season and its original program, *Bingo & a Movie*.

"I admire APTN because they have the courage to

Aboriginal Youth) Magazine, and Taylor George's Senior Art Director, Glen Sapach, earned Best Newspaper Campaign for work he did on behalf of Steinbach Credit Union prior to joining the agency in September.

Taylor George is a full-service advertising and design agency providing advertising concept, writing and design; branding and communications strategy; media planning and buying; account services; new media development and execution to regional and national clients.

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PERSONAL SUPPORT WORKER



The Kapawe'no First Nation is accepting applications for a personal support worker to provide care within the Home and Community Care Program one day per week, under the direction of the Home Care Nurse.

REQUIREMENTS

- A Personal Support Worker Certificate
- Must have a valid Alberta Drivers License
- Clearance of CPIC and CWIS investigations provided with resume

ASSETS

- Ability to speak Cree
- Flexible hours

Salary dependent upon qualifications and experience.

CLOSING DATE: Until position is filled

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McLeod Lake Indian Band voted overwhelmingly in favour of ratifying its land code consistent with the Framework Agreement on First Nations Land Management and the First Nations Land Management Act, announced Chief Harley Chingee, McLeod Lake Indian Band last month.

"I feel that this has been a tremendous step forward for my community's health, future and economic well being. There are many proposals for development that we are now able to confidently approach because we now have the authority to make our own decisions without delay," said Chief Chingee.

"The Chief, council and community of McLeod Lake are to be commended on their efforts in developing and ratifying their land code," said INAC Minister Robert Nault. "This achievement demonstrates that through initiatives like the First Nations Land Management Initiative, we can work with First Nations to provide the self-governance tools they need to build stronger, self-sufficient communities."

"On this very historic occasion, I would like to commend the people of McLeod Lake, for voting so resoundingly positive towards increased self sufficiency. This is obviously

ciency. This is obviously the end result of a lot of hard work, dedication and vision. All McLeod Lake members should be proud of this achievement," said Chief Robert Louie, Chair of the Lands Advisory Board.

The Framework Agreement and the First Nations Land Management Act, which were originally, open to only 14 signatory First Nations, are considered by the federal government to

be important building blocks to self-governance. This government-to-government Initiative provides participating First Nations with the opportunity to come out from under the land administration sections of the



Indian Act and establish their own regimes to manage their lands and resources, providing for more decision making at the local level. McLeod Lake is the first community to take advantage of the expansion of this initiative by ratifying their own land code.

The First Nations Land Management Initiative provides participating First Nations, like McLeod Lake Indian Band, the opportunity to develop a land code that reflects the unique needs and traditions of the community, and provides sound environmental protection for their own reserve lands and resources. The initiative enables First Nation communities to create a land code that will sustain local community decision making, provide transparent accountability to its members and accelerate progress in areas such as economic development.

The McLeod Lake Indian Band, also known as Tse'Khene Nation (People of the Rock) is a signatory of Treaty #8 and is located approximately 150 kilometres north of Prince George, British Columbia. With approximately 400 members, this small community has a main economic focus on logging, and oil and gas ventures.

In addition to the original 14 signatory First Nations, nineteen First Nations signed the Framework Agreement on First Nations Land Management last month.

"Signing the Framework Agreement with these new communities demonstrates just how successful this initiative can be in improving the quality of life in First Nations communities by building capacity and increasing economic development opportunities," said Minister Nault.

The 19 First Nations include: from British Columbia, Beecher Bay, Tsawout, Tsawwassen, Songhees, Pavillion, Burrard, Sliammon, Osoyoos, Kitselas, and Skeetchestn; from Saskatchewan, Kistiin, and Whitecap Dakota Sioux; from Ontario, Garden River, Mississauga, Whitefish Lake, Dokis, Kettle and Stony Point, and Moose Deer Point; and from New Brunswick, Kingsclear. Five of the original 14 signatory First Nations are now operating under their own land codes, they are: Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation (Ontario), Chippewas of Georgina Island First Nation (Ontario), Muskoday First Nation (Saskatchewan), Lheidli T'enneh First Nation (British Columbia), and Opaskwayak Cree Nation (Manitoba). The remaining nine signatory First Nations are in various stages of their community process.

Continued on Page 33

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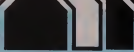


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Building Our Communities

Nelson Homes: Building a legacy

by Malcolm McColl

With over 50 years of home building experience, Nelson Homes has emerged as a leader in the housing industry. Randy Boychuk runs the First Nations Division of Nelson Homes, which works directly with many First Nations in Saskatchewan and Manitoba and leaves home sales to their dealer network elsewhere in Canada.

"We build panelized housing and deliver to the site," said Boychuk. "It provides a socioeconomic benefit in terms of the jobs required for the construction." Boychuk said there is a huge demand for housing in the First Nations. "There are 98,000 homes on reservations in Canada. The government has determined that about half are unfit housing. There will be 45,000 houses built in First Nations in the next decade."

Apparently the federal government has earmarked \$1.3 billion for First Nations housing, or about \$130 million a year in the next decade. "The government will be building about 4,500 homes a year, and 60 percent of those are on the prairies," said Boychuk. Nelson Homes, replete with a long-serving First Nations division, is in an enviable position with complete home buying services, and "with fabulous home designs and sensible floor plans."

Boychuk said, "Our housing solutions range from homes for young families just starting out, to exquisite executive styles as well as special care homes, vacation homes and multi-unit dwellings. Our product lineup includes the famous Nelson panelized home package, plus a line of modular homes and ready-to-move homes."

Nelson Homes grew out of a lumberyard in Edmonton that was established in 1949 and became one of Canada's largest homebuilders, with over 35,000 homes delivered. Boychuk said, "Nelson Homes has worked closely with the First Nations for over 50 years to fulfill their housing needs. Our commitment to quality, craftsmanship and integrity has earned us the trust of thousands of First Nations people throughout Western Canada."

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Raymond J. Nelson is the Co-Founder & Chairman Emeritus of Nelson Homes. "We began with a simple idea - give people top quality and more for their money," said Nelson. "It worked then and it works now. With that simple idea, we started Nelson Homes in 1958. Now with our recent acquisition of SRI Homes, Nelson is the largest home manufacturing company in Canada."

"With commitment comes change," he said. "We have adapted to a changing world, and made changes to the way we do business and provide service. The change has been supported by the stability of a team of over 800 qualified people, whose skills and talents are the ingredients of our success. And because we've stayed committed to our simple ideals, we've been able to earn your trust and support. We look forward

to the future with vision, confidence and pride. We have recently celebrated our 50th Anniversary," the chairman said. "People tend to call it a milestone - we call it a steppingstone."



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Enoch infrastructure for community and guests

by Malcolm McColl

The Enoch Indian Reserve is situated on the western boundary of Edmonton. Valerie Alexander is the manager of a new store that opened Jan 31, 2003, called North On 60 (Enoch is situated on Highway 60). Stores are already established on the reserve but lie on the opposite side of an increasingly busy highway. "The store was built because of safety issues regarding the highway," said Alexander.

The store offers gas, confectionery, smokes, groceries, and more. It is situated beside a busy recreation centre, at the north end of Enoch's village. "Our business gets a boost from the rec centre with all the hockey and sports activities. We have the Post Office and electronic services to bring in the community."

Alexander was hired to manage the store just eleven days before it opened. "I'm from Enoch, and I had experience as an assistant manager at Oskaya Store (at

important part of Canada's history."

The tour will show lifestyles of the various people who converged on Edmonton over the recent centuries. There are two nights of camp-outs. The first night is spent Native-style in an 18 foot Tee Pee. Tourists sample the diet and sleep in the traditional dwelling of the Cree First Nation. The next day they take a horseback trail-ride to the North Saskatchewan River from stables at Enoch. On the river's edge they camp again, sampling the food and shelter of the hunter/trapper lifestyle. On day three, they experience the Voyageur lifestyle, moving down the river in canoes to Fort Edmonton Park. The tour moves on that night to the bright lights of West Edmonton Mall.

Morin said, "We offer a lively experience of the historical timeline of the region. The package includes

performances by First Nation dancers and drummers, Metis jiggers and drummers, and the reenactments chronicled at the historic fort. To top it off, the tourists visit the largest mall in the world."

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Commission recommends negotiation of Alexis claim

In a report issued this month, the Indian Claims Commission (ICC) recommends that the federal government accept for negotiation a claim by the Alexis First Nation involving the federal Crown's grants of three rights-of-way to Calgary Power (now TransAlta Utilities) on the Band's reserve during the 1950s and 1960s. Alexis First Nation is located about 60 kilometres northwest of Edmonton, Alberta.

The First Nation maintained that the Government of Canada failed to protect the Band's interest in each of the three transactions. The focus of the claim, however, was Calgary Power's construction in 1969 of a transmission line across the reserve, for which the Band received a lump sum payment. The First Nation claimed that Canada failed to achieve fair and reasonable value for Calgary Power's use of reserve land under the 1969 agreement, resulting in a continuing loss of revenue until the late 1990s, when the First Nation began collecting tax revenue from the corporation.

The First Nation requested an inquiry into its claim in October 1999. The First Nation argued that the federal government's inactivity on its claim amounted to a rejection. In April 2000, the Commission ruled that the claim was deemed rejected and an inquiry could proceed. In January 2001, the federal government completed its review and informed the First Nation

that the claim was rejected.

Members of the Commission panel included Commissioners Roger Augustine, Daniel Bellegarde and Sheila Purdy. The panel concluded that the Government of Canada owes an outstanding lawful obligation to the Alexis First Nation.

Chief Commissioner Phil Fontaine said that the panel's findings led it to a number of conclusions that supported the First Nation's claim: "As our report indicates, the Crown failed to prevent an improvident or exploitative arrangement. In applying the test used in the *Apsassin* case of the reasonable person managing his own affairs, we concluded that the Crown would not have made such a deal for itself in 1969, given its knowledge that a one-time, lump sum payment was inadequate compensation for a long-term interest in reserve land. In addition, we found that in this case, the Crown had an ongoing duty after 1969 to take steps to recoup the losses under the expropriation agreement by assisting the First Nation to implement its taxation authority, if necessary collecting tax revenues from Calgary Power on the First Nation's behalf."

The Indian Claims Commission was established in 1991 to examine, at the request of a First Nation, specific claims rejected by Indian and Northern Affairs Canada.



Expanded water treatment plant for Standing Buffalo Dakota First Nation

The federal government has announced a \$832,000 expansion of the water treatment and demineralization plant on the Standing Buffalo Dakota First Nation.

"The responsibility for drinking water is shared between First Nations and the federal government," said INAC Minister Robert Nault. "Indian and Northern Affairs Canada will continue to work with First Nations and other partners to ensure a supply of clean, safe drinking water in First Nations communities."

This project will create new employment opportunities and allow members of Standing Buffalo Dakota First Nation to gain the experience and expertise

needed for the operation and maintenance of a water treatment system.

"Safe drinking water is a significant concern for members of the Standing Buffalo Dakota First Nation," said Acting Chief Roger Redman. "This new water treatment plant will provide safe and clean water which will go a long way in promoting a healthier community for our families."

The project includes the

installation of a second community well and hook-up to the water treatment plant, expansion of the water treatment plant and treatment improvements and upgrades.

The funds for this project are part of INAC's existing funding aimed at accelerating needed improvements in First Nations community water and sewage systems.

Standing Buffalo Dakota First Nation is located approximately eight kilometres northwest of Fort Qu'Appelle, Saskatchewan. The First Nation has a total population of close to 1,020 members, with approximately 400 people resident on-reserve.

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HAS GONE BEFORE! —

A time and place

by Xavier Kataquapit

When I think of my home community, Attawapiskat, on the James Bay coast, many of my memories have to do with certain landmarks or buildings. When my parents first moved to the community there were very few buildings. By the time I was born the community had developed quite a lot and there were many houses and community buildings.

One of these buildings marked the many changes that took place in the community while I was growing up. In the 1960s and 70s Attawapiskat had a major sawmill operation that provided the community with plenty of local lumber for constructing new homes. One of the buildings that was erected from this lumber was a large warehouse that was built on the edge of the then small town to store newly cut lumber. In time the sawmill business was slowly replaced by the development of acquiring lumber and plywood from modern mills in the south. The town also grew and soon the old warehouse, which continued to be used as storage for wood products, was located in the midst of a growing community.

During this time, my parents acquired a new home across the street from this old green coloured building that I knew well in my childhood. This old warehouse held many memories for me. My younger brother Joseph and I spent many afternoons in the old building collecting scrap pieces of wood blocks to bring home to play with. I come from a large family of eight brothers and sisters, so toys were a luxury we did not enjoy often. The wood blocks provided us with toys to play with. The old warehouse was also an exciting place for us as we often watched carpenters work and often we approached the building in awe of what was taking place inside. We would peek through the large double doors to spy on the various activities that took place there.

As I grew older, new storage facilities were built further away from town and the old warehouse was no longer needed. The interior was then refinished and the exterior painted in bright white. It was now a community hall. At first it was the site of lively dances that lasted all night with live bands. Later on, the space was used for Bingo events and other major gatherings.

In the mid 1980s, our local band office turned down in a major fire that consumed a complex of old buildings that housed the community's administration. After this fire, the offices were temporarily set up at the community hall for about a year while a new band office was constructed. It was at about this time when the old white building was covered over in a new layer

of exterior green coloured metal panelling. The change transformed the old centre into a temporary band office.

After a new band office was built and the offices moved out of the community hall, dances and bingos were again held on a regular basis inside the old build-

ing. The early 1990s was a time when the community hall began to be used as the site of major wedding receptions that featured great feasts for the entire community. I remember a period as a young teenager when several of my older cousins, brothers and sisters, married in a succession of four or five years. The old building was the scene of fiddle music, step dancing, the pop and country sounds of the Nakogee Brothers and the Attawapiskat Rock Band (ARB). There was always something exciting happening within its walls.

Sadly, a few years ago, the old building that had started out as a warehouse was destroyed by fire in a night time blaze that consumed the entire structure. A brand new home now sits on the site of the old community hall. It's strange to think that a building can mark the passage of time and has such a prominent place in my childhood memories. Fortunately, for those younger than me, a new building was constructed a few years ago behind the local school through fund-raising efforts. The new Reg Louitit Sports Complex features a large gymnasium and indoor rink. This state of the art building is used for local dances, bingos and receptions and dinners and will provide a place for many more happy memories.

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The Healing Journey

Anglican deal with feds angers aboriginal community

by John Copley

The Anglican Council of Indigenous Peoples (ACIP) is critical of the recent agreement between the Anglican Church and the Government of Canada that will see the church contribute \$25 million to help compensate thousands of residential school survivors who suffered at the hands of church officials while government bureaucrats did nothing help. In fact, ACIP Co-Chair, Andrew Wesley, said Aboriginal members of the Anglican Church of Canada want nothing to do with the deal. Wesley was particularly upset that the church's top official, Archbishop Michael Peers, brushed off a request by the ACIP to postpone signing the government offer "until changes were made to prevent revictimization of survivors and promote true healing and restoration."

Wesley said that over 27,000 Aboriginal members of the Anglican Church do not support the deal because it calls for school survivors to waive all current and future claims of compensation for such things as loss of language and loss of culture. More important, said Wesley, was the fact that the church insisted that the deal must be signed the way it was presented before they could receive compensation for physical and sexual abuse.

"We are simply not going to sell our birthright for a few dollars," he assured.

Meanwhile, the April edition of the Anglican Journal points out another disparaging aspect that causes one to wonder just how solid, or legal, the recent deal really is. According to the Journal, if extreme and unfair pressure hadn't been exerted by the church, no ACIP official would have signed the deal in the first place.

When federal Public Works Minister Ralph Goodale and Anglican primate Peers sat down to formally sign the agreement that limits Anglican Church responsibility at \$25 million only two ACIP members were in attendance - the rest boycotted the signing. The Anglican Journal (April 2003) reports that, "the sole ACIP member who attended, Elizabeth Beardsley, did so as the wife of Archdeacon Larry Beardsley, who is Cree and was a member of the Anglican team that negotiated the agreement with the federal govern-

ment. Archdeacon Beardsley, in an interview, called the agreement "a small step in a continuing journey of healing and reconciliation."

Inuit bishop, Andrew Atagotaaluk, of the Diocese of the Arctic, also attended the formal signing ceremony in Ottawa.

One member of the ACIP, Lorraine Still, told media that the day before the signing took place, Archbishop Peers told a group of ACIP members that if he refused to sign the agreement he would have to resign.

"He said he would have to sign it," she reported. "We were disappointed, but we said we would honour his decision."

Peers could not be reached for comment and the Anglican Church's head office in Toronto did not return phone calls from Alberta Native News.

Andrew Wesley told media that ACIP lawyers have warned them that the new deal could also put damper on any plans the church has to help Aboriginal Canadians in their continuing struggle to attain or maintain fishing and hunting rights and in their fight regarding land ownership.

The Anglican Journal received a statement from the ACIP just before going to print. The statement said that if the agreement proceeded as planned, it would be "signed and made official by the primate on behalf of the Anglican Church of Canada, (but) he will not be doing so in our name."



In response to those comments, the General Secretary for the Anglican Church of Canada, Archdeacon Jim Boyles, said that he was "sorry that they feel that

Continued on Page 37

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Man arrested for 1976 murder of activist

by John Copley

When the frozen body of Anna Mae Pictou-Aquash was discovered on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota, in February of 1976, authorities determined that she'd been dead for several months, the victim of a gunshot wound to the head. During the past 27 years, the story about Pictou-Aquash and her mysterious death has been told from a variety of perspectives and created so many rumours that it's difficult to know just where to begin. But a meaningful end to the story may be close, and if American policing authorities are correct, the many unanswered questions that involve the victim, her life, her death

and her circle of friends and compatriots, could soon be resolved. That's because earlier this month, police in Denver, Colorado, arrested 49 year old, Arlo Looking Cloud and charged him for the murder. They also issued an arrest warrant for a second suspect in the

murder, John Graham Patton, who authorities say may be living somewhere in Canada.

Pictou-Aquash, a member of Eastern Canada's, Mi'kmaq First Nation, was one of the protesting participants who occupied the hamlet of Wounded Knee, South Dakota, during a six-week standoff with Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) authorities in 1973. Artists and songwriters, including well known Canadian talent, Buffy St. Marie, have offered their versions over the years, including accusations that point the finger of racism and terror-filled tactics at the FBI, something that America's largest federal investigation unit has repeatedly denied.

"Why now? Why after 27 years?" ques-

Wishing all a safe and happy Easter



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A PREY OF THE EAGLE RAPTOR

CHRISTOPHER HARVEY CHAMBAUD

tioned American Indian Movement (AIM) International Affairs Director, Vernon

Bellecourt, in response to questions by Wisconsin-based, News from Indian Country Editor, Paul DeMain. "I've heard the scuttlebutt and accusations (against Looking Cloud) - but why 27 years later?"

Bellecourt says he hasn't heard from Looking Cloud for more than 25 years, but says he remains skeptical about his guilt if only because of the police actions he witnessed in 1973 and in the years since.

According to court documents, Pictou-Aquash was last seen in the fall of 1975, several months after a trio of individuals, including both Looking Cloud and Patton, allegedly entered the Denver, Colorado home of Troy Lynn Yellow Wood, and took 30 year old Anna Mae Pictou-Aquash with them. Yellow Wood, who

spoke to American Native media, said only that Pictou-Aquash "had been brought to my house as a place of refuge, a place to hide. I can't say any more than that."

An article written by journalist, David Melmer, and printed in a recent issue of the *Indian Country Today* semi-monthly newspaper, says much of the controversy and ultimately, most of the mystery, stems from the fact that some AIM members who participated in the protests of the 1970s were actually FBI informants. But no proof has been offered, with one exception, about who those people were. The one man who was identified, and who apparently admitted his undercover role as a police operative at Wounded Knee, is Doug Durham, a former AIM Chief Security Officer and the man in charge of security at Wounded Knee in 1973.

The rumour mills have come up with a variety of scenarios over the years and some have even accused Pictou-Aquash as being the real FBI informant, though it doesn't seem likely that she was the one to finger Durham as a police informant. The FBI have often refused to comment on the incident, but when they have, they've denied knowing any more than they've said - and until now that hasn't been enough to arrest anyone for Pictou-Aquash's murder.

The Associated Press (Denver) printed a statement from Pictou-Aquash's daughters, who now reside in Ontario and Nova Scotia, soon after they learned of Arlo Looking Cloud's arrest. They said they've heard the stories and the innuendoes over the years, but are now simply relieved and pleased that authorities stuck with the case.

"We have known for a long time that people have discussed amongst themselves the events that led up to her death," said Denise Maloney Pictou and Debbie Maloney Pictou, "yet publicly have remained silent. We are inspired with the actions of those who choose to courageously stand on their own and honor our mother's spirit with truth and integrity."

Looking Cloud, who was homeless at the time of his arrest, pled not guilty in a Denver court earlier this month, and is awaiting a decision on whether or not he will be transferred to South Dakota for trial. American authorities and the R.C.M.P. are currently looking for John Graham Patton.

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Aboriginal poverty labelled Canada's ugliest social problem

Aboriginal poverty is Canada's worst social wound and while remedying it will not be easy, ignoring the evidence will make the task impossible, says a C.D. Howe report released last month.

In an Institute Commentary, authors Helmar Drost a professor of economics and social and political thought at York University, and John Richards, Phillips Scholar In Social Policy and Fellow-in-Residence at the C.D. Howe Institute, who teaches in the business faculty at Simon Fraser University, say that even at the highest education levels, aboriginals earn significantly less than their nonaboriginal peers.

In the Commentary, "Income On- and Off-Reserve: How Aboriginals are Faring," the authors say: "Over the last two decades, aboriginal concerns moved to the centre of Canadian policy debates. However, most public attention has been devoted to on-reserve communities, which is inadequate: an increasing share of the aboriginal population lives off-reserve and in cities."

The authors say that while off-reserve aboriginals face often-severe social problems, census data show that they are faring significantly better than on-reserve aboriginals.



Drost and Richards point out that their aim is to present information — largely gleaned from the 1996 census — that demonstrates the difficult conditions that many aboriginals face, rather than prescribing remedial policies. For example, they say that only half of all aboriginals have a high school education; on-reserve, only a third have completed high school. By contrast, among all Canadians 15 and older, an estimated two-thirds have secondary or post-secondary educations. That educational deficit helps explain the

poverty in which many aboriginals live, the authors say.

"For all their problems," aboriginals living off-reserve are faring significantly better than those living on-reserve," Drost and Richards say.

The C.D. Howe Institute is Canada's leading independent, nonpartisan, nonprofit economic policy research institute. Its individual and corporate members are drawn from business, labour agriculture, universities and the professions.

Health report confirms urgency in First Nation communities

Assembly of First Nations National Chief Matthew Coome says this month's release of "A Statistical Profile on the Health of First Nations in Canada" confirms the urgency to improve the dismal health status of a young and growing First Nations population.

The report, released by the First Nations and Inuit Health Branch (FNIHB) of Health Canada, presents a national description of the current health status of First Nations people living on reserve.

"The report details the already well-known disparities in our health compared to non-Aboriginal Canadians. Most importantly, it highlights the health determinants that are directly related to our Third World health status," said National Chief Coome.

Those socio-economic determinants include infrastructure, housing, employment, income, environment, and education. So far, this government is more preoccupied on spending millions of dollars to impose unwanted colonial legislation on First Nations rather

results in the spread of communicable diseases such as tuberculosis, which is ten times higher among First Nations than the national average.

"Contaminated water spreads viral diseases such as Hepatitis A, which is 12 times higher in First Nations children than the national average, and shigellosis -- an acute and sometimes deadly intestinal illness -- which is 20 times higher than the national average."

The National Chief pointed out the report estimates a three percent

increase in on-reserve population each year over the next five years (2003 to 2008). "With a young, growing population, we need infrastructure funding and the tools to improve our socio-economic status in order to break out of our cycle of poverty and despair and join the rest of Canada in the 21st century."



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Under the Northern Sky

Learning From Elders

by Xavier Kataquapit

I discovered at a young age that it was good to spend time with my Elders and learn from their experience and knowledge. Growing up in my home community of Attawapiskat I was able to spend time with Elders who spent most of their lives on the land and held a great amount of knowledge of life in the wilderness and the traditions and culture of our people.

When I travel to other areas beyond my home community or to other parts of the world I still enjoy seeking out Elders to learn about other cultures and histories around me. When I am exploring a new place it is always a privilege for me to be able to spend time with an Elder who is willing to share their life experience and their knowledge of the land I am visiting.

Recently, I travelled to Europe in southern Spain where I met an older couple.

Ton (Antony) and Pop (Catharina) Lindeman, who are from Holland. Although Ton is 82 and Pop 73 years of age these two surprised me with their love of life and their constant search to learn about the world around them. They started visiting Spain more than 25 years ago and at one point lived along the southern coast of the country on a regular basis for 15 years.

When I first met them I was amazed and happy to see that they still live an active, full and busy life. Their idea of retirement has long been about discovery and they always have many places to go, things to do and people to see on a regular basis. I was fortunate enough to spend time with them and learn about new and interesting places in southern Spain. We travelled together to the southern mountains, the Guajiras, of the country and visited beautiful and interesting little towns off the beaten path. They introduced me to places and people I would never have met on my own. They also educated me about the Spanish language and culture. When visiting some of the places that were familiar to them they were welcomed by old friends they had known for many years.

During our time together they also shared their life experiences about living in Holland. They related

some of the good memories they had of growing up with their families but also the tragedies and hardships they dealt with during the Second World War. Pop was a young girl during this period who lived with her mother and family. Ton was a top competition figure skater and was well on his way to establishing himself when the war intervened and he ended up working in a plant in Germany.

Their hardships were many but they managed to survive the war and prosper. They have one son, Roy, a successful businessman in Holland.

This was the first time I had heard of war from the perspective of people who were there. They shared their experiences of this time and told me of the hardships and difficulties they faced. They talked about situations and circumstances that left them with terrible images that remain in their memories. Pop shared her memories of fear and anxiety when her family

lived close to a German V-rocket launch site. She remembers listening to rockets being sent across the English Channel while huddled in bed with her family at night. Ton's experiences were difficult as well and he had to deal with leaving his standing as a national champion figure skater as he was forced to work for those who occupied the country. His stories grew dark as he related some of the images and experiences he recalled when whole towns and armies were bombed out by high flying aircraft during the conflict.

I know it was difficult for both Ton and Pop to share their memories and recollections of the war. Their eyes filled with tears when they talked about the death and destruction they witnessed. Yet, I was really moved by the fact that they had put all of this behind them and held no grudges. They do have an opinion about war though...they believe that there is never the need to go to war and that things can be settled in some other way. I don't think anyone could ever convince Ton and Pop that any war is just. They have first hand experience that proves there is no justice in war. They have reaffirmed my own belief that we should all say no to war or some day we will have to pay the price for not standing up to those who believe that there is a place for war in our world. Meegwech to Ton and Pop for their words of wisdom, their humour, kindness and willingness to share what they know.



May the Spring season bring peace and well-being to all First Nations, from the staff at

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Tlicho Agreement completed

The Tlicho Agreement has been completed and initiated by the Chief Negotiators of the Dogrib Treaty 11 Council, the Government of Canada and the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT). The ratification process has now begun.

The Tlicho Agreement is the first agreement in the Northwest Territories to combine both land claim and self-government elements. The Tlicho Agreement incorporates changes made by the chief negotiators following the information exchange period. During this period, Aboriginal groups, special interest groups and the general public met with the negotiators and provided comments on the Tlicho Agreement. The agreement was also revised to ensure that it was compatible with an overlap agreement concluded between the Tlicho and the Deh Cho First Nations, and with an overlap agreement signed between the Tlicho and the Akaitcho First Nations.

"This historic agreement builds upon a long standing relationship with Governments that began in 1921, with Chief Monfwi," said Grand Chief Joe Rabesca. "It puts into words in greater detail how we will work together on matters important to all of us." "This Agreement will give the Tlicho people the tools to exercise greater control over their day-to-day lives and their future. With land and self-government arrangements in place, the Tlicho will be more self-sufficient and will be able to make a tangible, positive difference to the quality of life of their citizens and communities," said Robert Nault, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (DIAND).

"I commend the negotiators for completing the Tlicho Agreement," said Jim Antoine, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, Government of the Northwest Territories. "This initiating brings all parties closer to ratification of the Tlicho Agreement, which, once ratified, will be the first comprehensive self-government and land claim agreement in the NWT."

An Eligibility Committee will oversee the voting and enrolment processes and will provide eligible voters with information on the Tlicho Agreement. For more information on the ratification process, please contact the Tlicho Agreement Eligibility Committee at 867-766-3391 or visit their website at www.tlichoenroll.com

The self-government portion of the Agreement includes the establishment of the Tlicho Government which would have law-making powers to manage Tlicho land and resources, and to protect Tlicho lan-



Indian land and waterways. ©

Christopher Harvey Hammond 2001.


guage, heritage and culture. Existing local governments in the four Tlicho communities of Behcho Ko (Rae-Edzo), Wha Ti (Lac la Martre), Gameti (Rae Lakes) and Wekweti (Snare Lake) would be replaced by Tlicho community governments.

Once successfully ratified, the Tlicho Agreement will be signed by representatives of the Parties. After the Agreement is signed, the GNWT and the Government of Canada would pass settlement legislation to bring the Tlicho Agreement into effect.

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Art and Culture

Mi'kmaq culture honoured by Prince Edward Island tourists

by H. C. Miller

The Mi'kmaq community of Lennox Island, located in the east-central portion of picturesque Prince Edward Island, is ensuring that Mi'kmaq culture is preserved and appreciated by local residents and tourists alike.

Indian Art and Craft of North America is located on the reserve on Lennox Island, which is linked to the main island by paved road and bridge. Beadwork, pottery, carvings, drums, pipes, beaddresses and moccasins are just a few of the traditional items featured for viewing and for sale in the shop, located overlooking beautiful Malpeque Bay. The shop specializes in Mi'kmaq ash-splint baskets and birch-bark novelty items.

The area has long been revered in Aboriginal folklore, explained on a plaque displayed outside the Cultural Centre which reads, "Untold generations of Aboriginal people have respected and cherished these lands and waters. Archeological evidence and oral tra-

ditions indicate a Native presence on the shores of the Bay dating back 10,000 years. Their spiritual attachment to this place endures Malpeque Bay with a significance which all Canadians can appreciate."

The Ecotourism Complex features the Minego Café where traditional foods have proven popular with tourists. The Maskwi Nature Store and Outdoor Adventure Centre treats visitors to guided deep-sea fishing and nature excursions. Another enterprise is the Mi'kmaq Kayak Adventures, which features 24-hour trips unparalleled for natural beauty and scenery. Visiting uninhabited islands, the tours give participants an unequalled look of secluded sand dunes, beaches and peaceful paddling experiences.

Even more spectacular, though, is the fact that these numerous businesses are staffed by the members of the Lennox Island First Nation, population 245. The story behind the location of the First Nation is a happy one in that the land was reclaimed from European hands by the Aboriginal Protection Society (APS) which bought Lennox Island for 400 pounds on June 2, 1870, giving the Mi'kmaq people title to their traditional lands. When PEI entered confederation in 1873, giving it status as a province of Canada, the agreement was honoured. The Island further gained "special" reserve status in the passing of the Indian Act in 1876.

Traditional ways have been passed down from generation to generation for thousands of years, although they came close to extinction at one time. Slowly and steadily, the Mi'kmaq people are regaining the spiritual existence taught by their forefathers and demonstrated in the art work and hand crafted items. The Lennox Island Mi'kmaq Cultural Centre officially opened on June 28, 2000 by the Honorable Governor General of Canada Adrienne Clarkson. The Centre is

dedicated to the Elders of the community for their wisdom and knowledge that they have dedicated to their people. An interpretive display which explains the history of the Mi'kmaq through artifacts, cultural awareness, and educational activities is well attended by tourist and local residents alike. But the story doesn't end here. On May 24, 2002, the Honorable Robert Nault, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, announced an investment of \$250,000 to assist with the third phase of the Lennox Island First Nation Aboriginal Eco-Tourism Program. This phase of the project will see the construction of a Nature Trail, "The Path of Our Forefathers," and an Adventure Centre on Lennox Island.

The project will provide space for business development, including traditional food services, and greatly assist in showcasing Mi'kmaq culture to area tourists. The construction represents an important addition to the Aboriginal Eco-tourism project as the Mi'kmaq strive to meet goals of a 10-year plan of strengthening the community's economy and culture.



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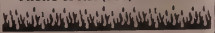
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About Our Cover Artist

Artist Profile D.B. Pawis

My name is Daniel Beatty Pawis. I am Anishnabe from Shawanaga First Nation Ojibway near Parry Sound, Ontario. Yes, I'm one of Ralph's original Eastern Bums but I evolved into a Western Bum and a darn proud one!

While I do not feel obligated to share my given "native" name, it does translate to Fast Moving Sky. I sign my artwork with a double "S" in honour of my great Grandfather whose signature appeared the same way on the Robinson Huron Treaty way back when the Hudson Bay Company was really ripping us off.

I discovered colour at an early age when I first started eating my Crayolas. Now I just nibble on my brushes cuz old habits die hard. My first conflict with the law came about because we did some unsolicited artwork on the back of our school... kind of ironic that today I get paid for something quite similar, it's still Graffiti.

Colour is one of the things we often take for granted, the world around us would be pretty dull if it were only Black and White. Today's artwork is a phenomenal dedication to the Creator's

original design. It is the artist's responsibility to translate legends, traditions and prophecies. It's also the perfect medium to interpret dreams and ideas. Once our children discover how to colour their worlds, we are blessed with their visions of the world around them.

How we interpret our worlds depends on our individual outlook. It also reflects our dreams, demons and desires. My artwork has joined collections in Russia, Holland and Britain, and as far south as Arizona and New Mexico. I have exhibited in Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Ontario. I'm fortunate to be a featured artist in 2 Ontario school textbooks. My work has allowed me to meet alot of very nice people. I look forward to meeting more.



When I moved to Alberta 19 years ago, I didn't think I'd wind up staying here. I've been very fortunate to learn the many lessons the Plains people have shared with me. I still have lots to learn, I still have lots to share. I hope you enjoy what I've shared so far.

All my Relations,

AFN accuses

continued from page 2

members from other parties, and arrogantly disregarding the testimony of hundreds of First Nations witnesses. The Minister himself has taken punitive action against our peoples and governments for not supporting his new Indian Act. And they claim they can lecture First Nations about openness and accountability?"

On April 2, only two days after the hearings wrapped up, Liberal members tried to move directly to amending the legislation - even though the vast majority of witnesses told the Committee not to amend it but to scrap it outright - and to limit debate to ten minutes per amendment.

NDP Committee Member Pat Martin launched into a spontaneous filibuster that continued into the next day. The Liberals used illegitimate procedures to cut him off, so BQ Committee member Yvan Loubier launched into a filibuster of his own. BQ MP Yvan Loubier had physical threats and insults hurled at him during an in-camera session. The situation deteriorated to the point that both Martin and Loubier raised points of order in the House of Commons on April 3rd.

"The Liberal Chair used disgraceful language unworthy of his office and unworthy of the institution we respect," said MP Loubier. "If the Liberals truly believe they can defend this colonial legislation then they should have the fortitude to do so in an open, democratic, and respectful process. The fact they're resorting to cursing and name-calling reveals their desperation."

"It's clear that the Liberal government cannot defend their new Indian Act and do not want to listen to the voices of First Nations so they're trying to avoid a full and open debate," said MP Martin. "I raised my voice

in defense of Parliamentary democracy and First Nations rights, and the Liberals raised their voices to try and shout me down. This issue is too important for First Nations and Canada to be the subject of game-playing and procedural trickery. This is not an MP pay raise. We'll all pay the price if this legislation goes through."

"First Nations have been ignored and intimidated all through the Governance Act process," said Chief Fox. "Less than 1 percent of First Nations citizens took part in the initial consultations, and the majority of those who did spoke against the legislation. The Minister inflated the numbers by including anonymous calls to a 1-800 line and through the Indian Affairs website, and created and funded First Nations organizations that would support his legislation."

This pattern continues through the Committee process. An AFN staff member and a Canadian Press reporter tried to attend a Committee meeting on the evening of April 7 and both were ordered to leave and ejected by Committee Chair Bonin. Grand Chief Margaret Swan and an assistant attended a Standing Committee meeting on April 8 and, when they tried to raise their concerns, were forcibly ejected by the Hill Security at the order of the Chair.

Grand Chief Swan stated: "The 'Nault cult' are following the example set by their leader, using thugery and strong-arm tactics to try and ram this Bill through the Committee. The Minister's background as a railway man is obvious in the way he's trying to railroad this Bill through Parliament. We'd prefer to work in partnership with the government, just as the Treaties say we should, but if they try and roll over us I guarantee we will de-rail that train and its conductor."

"I applaud the members of the Standing Committee that are committed to holding the government accountable to the general public and First Nations," said National Chief Coon Come. "If the Liberal government and the Minister of Indian Affairs are truly committed to democracy they'll listen to the vast majority of people who say no to the Governance Act, no to colonialism, and yes to a process that respects Aboriginal and Treaty rights and respects Canada's Constitution that recognizes those rights. Their actions in the coming days will reveal where they stand."

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Johnny does it his way

by Harold Sigalet

After the sun dropped in a blaze of orange and scarlet behind the dark filigree of the pines, an enormous moon sauntered above the jagged tree-tops and transformed the forest into streams of silver.

In an opening by a cold mountain stream, the aged Native, Johnny Jack, decided to camp for the evening and have a good night's rest for him and his dogs. Johnny had shot a moose that day. He and his dogs were packing the meat back to where his friends lived and where he would smoke it over alder wood and share with his friends. When he had hunched the moose early in the morning, he placed the heart of a stick pointing at the heavens as a gratuity to the animal spirits. This was a ritual Johnny never forgot to undertake.

After feeding his dogs, Johnny started a little fire and while cooking a moose steak encased in green willow sticks, he placed a large chunk of moose liver on his campfire. The meat sizzled and bubbled like morning porridge. The slow, curling smoke twisted the cooking odours upwards into the star-filled heavens and disappeared amongst the ghostly, fluctuating hands of aurora borealis. To Johnny Jack, the mysterious ribbons of northern lights, fading from bright to dull and back to light as they pictured the steely, cold sky, were his ancestors and the spirits enjoying themselves in that unknown world beyond; a world that he could not comprehend but a world about which he loved to dream and fantasize. And when he meditated thusly, a peaceful serenity crept into his heart and

massaged his soul. He could sense and feel the presence of some Higher Power.

Johnny was one of those

sincere Natives who tenaciously clung to some of the beliefs of his ancient ancestors. Unlike the



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cruel, inhospitable, northern winters, nature raised Johnny to be a kind person, thoughtful and considerate of others. For him, the placing of a piece of meat on the fire was an honest gift direct to the gods from his heart. It was his way of thanking the spirits not only for aiding him in finding a moose that day but also for providing all things on earth.

Johnny's philosophies were innate. He liked his own beliefs. They were meaningful to him. He just could not abandon his own world for any white man's religion.

Once, an over-zealous but well-meaning preacher (one of those preachers who was convinced that God put him on earth especially to convert those whom he considered sinners) ordered Johnny, in the name of God, to give up his "savage" and "heathen" practices and attend church to be saved and become a good Christian. But the stubborn Johnny preferred to stick with his own ideas about the super-natural. With thoughtful and careful preparation, Johnny slowly

Continued on Page 33

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McLeod Lake

continued from page 20

The First Nations Land Management Initiative offers First Nations the ability to create modern tools of governance over their lands and resources, specifically with respect to developing land codes; passing laws (in areas such as the environment and matrimonial real property); enforcing laws; establishing inter-governmental relationships with provincial and municipal governments; and clarifying the legal status of Bands and Band Councils. This Initiative has proven to be successful in building First Nations' capacity in the area of land management and increasing economic development opportunities on reserve. The Initiative is a tool First Nations have said they need to provide the freedom and responsibility to manage their own reserve lands, natural resources, and revenues in a way that works best for them. It allows First Nations to make timely business and administrative decisions without having to get approval by the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development.

In the transition process of coming under the Initiative, a participating First Nation will develop a land code setting out the basic rules for the new land regime. The land code is developed with the full involvement of the community and must be ratified by voting members living both on and off-reserve. The First Nation also enters into an individual agreement with the Government of Canada to determine the level of operational funding for land management and to set out the specifics of their transition to the new regime. Once the land code and the agreement are adopted by the First Nation membership and are in effect, the land administration provisions of the Indian Act no longer apply to that community.

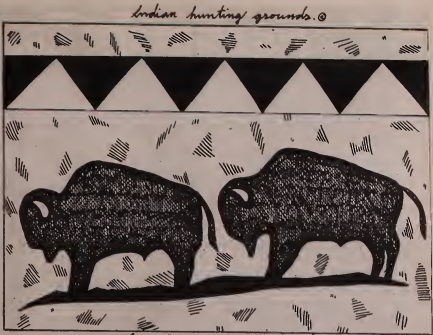
Johnny does it

continued from page 32

replied, "I do not need a preacher. I do not need a church. My church is inside me. I give my thanks and gifts not to preachers, churches but direct to my God. The God that I understand."

The kind, old Johnny was born with a heart of Yukon gold. But, unlike the metallic gold, his heart was altruistic. Without invitation, his altruism flowed as natural as a fresh mountain stream. On this trip he was hunting for meat for the winter, not for himself but so that his fellow men would not go hungry.

Sitting around the fire Johnny and his dogs thought about things. And he talked to his dogs. And they listened. "As the white men moved into the north, their spirits moved in with them and gradually became



Christopher, Harvey, Chamhard, 2003.

more important than Indian spirits." The dogs perked their ears. They understood what he was saying. "The voices of my spirits are becoming very dim. Sometimes I can see them preparing the opening in the sky so that I can enter. Soon they will be calling for me. I am growing very old and the time is near when I will need to enter the world of the spirits."

Deep in thought, old Johnny gazed, as if hypnotized, at the fire for a long time. His dogs started dozing off. He decided he should talk to them a little more. He felt a strong urge to express some of his thoughts out loud. His dogs were good listeners.

"Young Indians today have forgotten our ancient ways. Many no longer know how to live with the land and with the spirits any more. They have become soft. They depend on the Band office for hand outs. They have become selfish, thinking only of themselves. They are the me, me, me generation. Some are addicted to drugs and alcohol. Some are becoming worse drunks than white men." He chuckled at his own sense of humour, a tickling humour common to a lot of Natives. Around the fire, doggy smiles joined him.

The nearby stream tinkled applauding chuckles.

As the flames of his fire flickered low and billions of sparkling jewels replaced the dancing aurora borealis in the sky of cobalt, the old man and his dogs slipped into slumberland to dream of the unknown.

When the sun poked his shining head over the mountain top, burning away the morning mist amongst the spruce and pine trees, Johnny fitted the dogs with their pack sacks. After leaving a gift of tobacco by a tree for the spirits, Johnny strapped on his packboard and they were off on their slow journey homeward.

With an ample supply of meat for his friends, Johnny and his faithful dogs were in an exceptionally happy mood. And the world around them joined in their happiness.

He knew that the spirits were pleased with him. He knew it because he could sense a serenity deep within his infinite self. A serenity that only a Higher Power could grant him. And he was grateful to the Higher Power.

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Focusing Our Resources

Government financing still a pipeline option

by John Copley

A recent announcement in Ottawa by Indian Affairs and Northern Development Minister, Robert Nault, has turned the tide in favour of the Aboriginal Pipeline Group (APG), an entity representing numerous northern Alberta and Northwest Territories (NWT) First Nations groups interested in pursuing an economic venture that will put food on the tables and dollars in the pockets of northern Aboriginal communities for years to come. Nault's announcement, that government would leave the financing option open and if necessary, come up with the nearly \$75 million needed by the APG to fund its share of the pipeline project's preliminary work, contradicted earlier statements by Natural Resources Minister Herb Dhalwal, who said that government wasn't in the business of loaning money. But it isn't likely that government will find it necessary to fund the APG, not now that a deal with TransCanada Pipeline is in the making.

The Senior Vice President of Aboriginal Banking for the Bank of Montreal, Ron Jamieson, was right last winter when he called the pipeline deal "a complex transaction involving a large number of stakeholders, some of whom will have competing objectives," but Nault's recent announcement will likely support his further claim that, "in our opinion, financing for high quality projects of this nature can be

arranged amongst Canadian institutional investors."

Interest in the project by TransCanada Pipelines, a large and well-established Canadian firm with ties to some of the biggest pipeline contractors in the world, is no secret. They've been pursuing the idea for some time, though the first reports of their interest didn't surface until February this year when word came that they were about to strike a deal, providing they were given a lead role in the construction stage of the project.

APG Chairman, Fred Carmichael, told media earlier this month that they were indeed talking to TransCanada, and that progress was being made. But he added, "when you're in negotiations of this size, it's difficult to give a definite date of completion." Carmichael said the deal would not be rushed.

The Aboriginal Pipeline Group, based in Inuvik, NWT, has been seeking a partner for some time and has never shown any indication that they can be pushed into a bad deal. But when Minister Dhalwal put a damper on any prospects or hopes the APG had with his speech a few months ago, the group was forced to look elsewhere, perhaps even internationally for the funding they'd need for their share of the deal. The APG is already in debt to the tune of \$70 million, that's what they owe for work already done - another \$80 million or so will also be needed to finance their share in the next phase of the operation. Carmichael told media that he isn't about to throw the baby out with the bath-water.

"This is a large deal for the Aboriginal people and we must make sure that we get the best possible deal," he said.

The APG has a one-third interest in the estimated \$4 billion project. The other share of the deal belongs to an oil and gas producers' consortium that includes Imperial Oil Resources, Exxon Mobile Canada, Gulf Resources Canada and Shell Canada. The consortium has been waiting patiently and quietly on the sidelines, though they are anxious to get the project underway. Delay costs money and even if construction started tomorrow, it would be at least four years before the first fuels flow. It's been nearly two years since the oil producers' consortium negotiated a deal and signed an agreement with all eight major Aboriginal groups in the north, including the Dene Cho, the one group who originally had problems with the environmental aspects of the agreement. But the lack of money for the

APG's end of the deal, created by the natural wariness that big businesses have when federal governments appear to turn their thumbs down, may no longer be an issue.

Minister Nault has made it clear that he wants the "option" to finance to remain open as a last resort. The APG feels the



same way. Fred Carmichael told media that his group has never put any real pressure on government to finance the deal and there's a reason for it.

"We feel very strongly," said Carmichael, "that we've got a good enough deal that it is finance-able in the commercial market, and as a rule government loans or guarantees are sort of a last resort."

When the U.S. Energy Bill met its quick demise early last fall it also meant an end to the heavily sponsored Alaska Pipeline project - a could-be competitive enterprise run by American pipeliners. That could change, especially since it seems unlikely that U.S. President Bush will not get the support he needs in the Senate to open the Arctic Wildlife Refuge to oil exploration and development, something he's been urging since his inauguration to the presidency.

Perhaps that is one of the reasons why the nonchalant, or at least quietly pessimistic attitudes that for the past year have left little more than a pilot light burning on the once-celebrated possibility of seeing Canadian involvement in the much talked about Mackenzie Valley pipeline project, have disappeared. There's a new excitement in the air that has government changing its mind and industry readying itself for economic recovery and future reward. Now all that's needed is a finalization to the deal currently underway between the APG and TransCanada Pipeline.

INAC Minister Robert Nault, who recently attended an oil and gas conference in Houston, Texas, told media that he found "overwhelming support in the U.S. oil and gas industry for a northern pipeline route, selected by market forces, and a clear signal from industry that there is momentum behind the Mackenzie Valley route. In Canada, especially in the North, there is tremendous potential for creating job and promoting economic development through oil and gas development."

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Forestry program renewed until 2008

Innovative forestry initiatives in First Nations communities will continue to receive support from the Government of Canada. Robert Nault, Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC), and Herb Dhaliwal, Minister of Natural Resources Canada (NRCAN), recently announced that the Government of Canada will renew the First Nations Forestry Program (FNFP) until March 31, 2008.

"The FNFP has played a major role in creating economic development opportunities and encouraging First Nations to participate in the forest sector," said

the FNFP aims to improve access to economic development in these communities by providing the opportunity to enhance their capacity to manage forests; operate and participate in forest-based businesses; and increase cooperation and partnerships among First Nations. This program enables First Nations to increase their forestry-related

knowledge, capabilities and business skills which is essential to increasing their participation in Canada's forest sector.

Since it was established in 1996, the FNFP has supported more than 1,300 projects with \$34 million in federal contribution funding and \$63 million in partnered funding, creating more than 74,000 weeks of work and helping 5,600 First Nations workers gain valuable job experience. As well, some 375 communities, or approximately 61 percent, of the 612 First Nations in Canada participate in the program; the majority of these communities are

located in rural and remote areas. As the non-Aboriginal workforce ages and as First Nations communities gain more access to forest resources through treaties, land entitlements and other agreements, the FNFP continues to provide opportunities to First Nations.

Minister Nault. "This program has attained its objectives beyond all expectations, I am very pleased to announce its renewal, and it is our hope that this will provide long-term stability to the program." "During the past seven years, the FNFP has been a very successful Government-First Nations partnership," said Minister Dhaliwal. "With the renewal of this program, the Government of Canada can continue to help First Nations communities and workers gain valuable experience in managing our forests."

The Government of Canada will contribute \$6.5 million per year — \$3.25 million from INAC and \$3.25 million from NRCAN — for the next five years to support the FNFP. This is an increase of \$2 million per year from previous years.

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Spirit Man

by Michelle Langshaw

My spirit soars with the eagle into a past life
 A time of prairie grass, teepees and buffalo
 I fly through the night on a golden horse with drums
 calling to me through the setting sun

I am a warrior strong and proud.
 I have fought many battles and hunted the buffalo.
 I am a spirit man.

And the spirits guide me to the buffalo when the young ones cry.

I take what I need from Mother Earth and give thanks through the drums of my ancestors
 I have fought my last battle.

An arrow has found its mark and I lay dying in the arms of my creator.

I am laid to rest with my bow, arrows and spirit pouch to help me on my long journey.

The wolf, my spirit animal, comes to take me to a better place.

The FNFP is known for its excellence and achievements. The Treasury Board Secretariat recognized it in its February 2001 Report to Parliament as one of the 12 outstanding programs within the Government of Canada. It was also selected as a successful example of interdepartmental cooperation in the May 2000 report of the Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development of the Office of the Auditor General of Canada.

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Conservation strategy needed to secure a future for Banff's grizzlies

Many think of Banff National Park as a haven for grizzly bears, but for the last two years grizzlies have been dying at five times the target set out in the Banff National Park management plan. This unsustainable mortality rate, coupled with the sheer volume of development and visitation in such important grizzly bear habitat, has prompted the Bow Valley Grizzly Bear Alliance, the Alberta Wilderness Association and Wildcanada.net to call for the development and implementation of a comprehensive grizzly bear conservation strategy for Banff National Park.

The Bow Valley Grizzly Bear Alliance released a report this month entitled "The Bear Necessities: A Grizzly Bear Conservation Strategy for Banff National Park." The report provides a scientifically defensible and socially responsible blueprint for ensuring that grizzly bears remain an integral part of Banff's natural and cultural heritage. It pulls together the latest science-based recommendations to highlight some of the strategies necessary to decrease human-caused mortality rates, ensure grizzlies have access to secure and effective habitat, and ensure connectivity between good habitat within and outside the Park.

"Clearly efforts to date have not been enough to secure a future for grizzly bears within the Park," says Grizzly Bear Alliance program director Tracey Henderson. "The National Parks Act states that parks



should be managed first and foremost for ecological integrity and yet grizzly bears, one of the indicator species for Banff's ecological integrity, are dying at an unsustainable rate." Henderson added that much of the information and management strategies necessary for protecting grizzly bears are known; what is lacking is the political will and financial backing to implement them.

The 1997 Banff National Park Management Plan is currently undergoing its five-year review. "The Bear Necessities" suggests that a comprehensive grizzly bear conservation strategy should be implemented as part of the review process, which will end early this summer. The public will have a chance to comment on the management plan at a series of open houses being held in Calgary, Banff, Lake Louise and Canmore or via an on-line questionnaire through the Parks Canada website. "Canadians have a choice to make," says Stephen Legault of Wildcanada.net. "We can choose continued commercial development in Banff National Park, or we can choose grizzly bears. Over the long run we can't choose both."

Banff's grizzly bears lie at the heart of a provincial

grizzly bear population that is in serious trouble. Last spring the Alberta government's Endangered Species Conservation Committee recommended that grizzly bear be listed as a species "threatened" with extinction. Nigel Douglas, outreach coordinator with the Alberta Wilderness Association, says "Increasing threats to grizzlies from expanding human use of bear habitat outside the Park makes it even more important that Banff be managed as a core refuge for grizzly bears in the Central Rockies Ecosystem."

"The Bear Necessities" also includes results from a recent survey of Banff Park's visitors. These surveys show overwhelming support for measures aimed at protecting grizzly bears. Over 80% of respondents supported hiking and camping restrictions to protect grizzly bear habitat and 98% believed it is important to protect the grizzly bear from extinction. "With overwhelming public support and the clear scientific evidence of a grizzly population in trouble, there is no need to wait any longer to take the necessary steps to ensure a future for this magnificent species. It's the right thing to do environmentally, socially and economically," says Henderson.

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Project promotes and protects healthy shorelines

by Jaci Metivier

The Adams Lake Band became concerned in 1999 that the pressures of increasing population and recreational activity on Shuswap Lake were harming shorelines and water quality. Salmon fry from the Adams River spend their early years in the lake and are dependent on clean water and healthy shorelines for their survival. The tourism industry, a key part of the region's economy, also relies on the pristine shorelines and unspoiled waters of the lake. But were shoreline residents, those who lived on leased band land as well as on private property, concerned as well, and did they know what they could do?

A survey of local leaseholders revealed that they were interested in learning more about what they could do to look after their piece of shoreline. With the help of the Living by Water Project, the Adams Lake Band began a two-year program involving site visits and delivery of information packages to shoreline residents both on and off band land. Over 1700 packages were distributed informing homeowners about regulations, guidelines and opportunities for preserving and restoring foreshore fish habitat.

The band purchased 400 copies of "On the Living Edge - Your Handbook for Waterfront Living" for distribution. Written by Sarah Kipp and Clive Callaway of the Living by Water Project, the book is a resource for shoreline residents, offering practical tips and advice that will also benefit their shorelines. Editions for Alberta and Ontario have now been published, and a combined Saskatchewan/Manitoba edition will be available after May 1, 2003.

Last spring, the Living by Water Project launched the Community-based Action Program for Shorelines (CAPS) to provide groups -- First Nations, municipalities, conservation and stewardship groups, realtors,

government agencies -- access to training and high-quality, ready-to-use stewardship resources. By learning to increase their efficiency and effectiveness in working with permanent and seasonal shoreline residents, community groups can, in turn, protect their water quality, maintain habitat for fish and other wildlife, and enhance recreation and tourism.

Living by Water offers clinics for realtors and elected officials that help them to better understand the values of healthy natural shorelines, and the potential impacts of their decisions and points of view. Other services include training in conservation marketing and homesite assessment, templates for media contact and funding applications, a free Shoreline Event and Activity Manual, and various communication materials. Living by Water supports the work of other groups by promoting initiatives such as the Great Canadian Shoreline Cleanup, Canada's National Rivers Day (June 8th, 2003) and the Wonder of Water (WOW-www.wonderofwater.ca).

Freshwater and marine shoreline residents and community groups can make a difference by hanging into focus the importance of a healthy, natural shoreline for maintaining water quality, protecting property values by buffering the shore from erosion and flooding, and providing habitat for fish and other wildlife. This protected shoreline is also the best bet for offering shoreline visitors the kind of outdoor experiences that they're looking for.

You can contact the Living by Water Project for more information or to purchase books at 250-832-7405, shorelines@jetstream.net, or www.livingbywater.ca



By 00

Anglican deal

continued from page 25

but added that he was "personally committed" to working with the group to help resolve the ACIP's concerns.

Minister Goodale defended the deal by saying that the courts have not yet compensated Natives for such claims, but forgot to mention that many cases involving land claims and lost lifestyle are either now before the courts or soon will be.

Ottawa has concluded that it will take about \$1.8 billion to settle the more than 12,000 law suits being launched against the federal government by former residential school students who claim they suffered various forms of abuse and illegal confinement at the hands of government and four major church groups.

ACIP website documents that define the organization and its purpose, state in part that, "we have had residential schools, which tore us from home and suppressed our traditions, our languages, our relationship with the land and the Creator - our very identities. Yet, there have been times when the churches have been our best support in the Canadian society - against those who coveted the land, who would see the death of our language and culture. We are in this together, and we will continue to journey together."

Whether or not the recent deal caused by dissenting positions and opinions regarding the Anglican Church/federal government agreement will change the ACIP's position remains to be seen. The ACIP did tell media, however, that they are urging Native Anglicans not to cooperate with the alternative dispute resolution (ADR) process, which is currently designed to

validate claims, distribute compensation and replace litigation.

The ADR process, says ACIP member, Maria Jane Highway, "is offensive - and we want changes made." She added that the ADR process requires considerable paperwork and written information from victims if they are to have any chance at having their claims validated.

"A lot of our people," added the ACIP member, Eunice McMahon, "do not have the skills to read and interpret it. We are going home and we will be telling (our communities) not to use the ADR process."

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LEGEND

Wesuhkechahk and the Rock

Collected and illustrated by James Ratt; told by Adam B. Ratt

One day Wesuhkechahk was running along a path in the forest. As usual, he was looking for adventure, but nothing seemed to present an opportunity for him. He had not been able to find any geese or animals to torment. Still jogging along, Wesuhkechahk came upon a huge rock.

"Hello, Kitchi-usine!" said Wesuhkechahk to the rock.

"Hello, Wesuhkechahk!" replied the rock. "My, can you ever run fast!"

"I'm the fastest runner in the land," boasted Wesuhkechahk with a big smile on his face. "Why don't you and I have a race?"

Kitchi-usine laughed and said, "How could a large boulder like me race with you? I have no legs!"



"You can race like this," replied Wesuhkechahk as he began to shove Kitchi-usine along the path.



Behind him, Wesuhkechahk heard Kitchi-usine rolling down the hill. The trees were crashing to the ground under the weight of the rock. Wesuhkechahk ran faster but Kitchi-usine caught up with him.



Wesuhkechahk tripped and fell at the bottom of the hill where the enormous rock stopped on top of his legs, pinning him to the ground.

"Little brother! Get off my legs!" Cried Wesuhkechahk.



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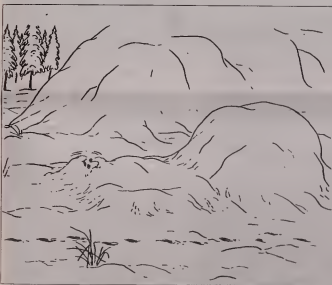
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But there was no reply from the stone. Wesuhkechahk decided to show his great patience to the stubborn Kitchi-usine. He would wait until the large boulder moved.

The summer months passed. Moss and lichen grew on the arms, body and hair of Wesuhkechahk. Later, the leaves fell as autumn came and covered the prisoner.



The snows of winter followed and the Indian suffered terribly from the cold. Still the rock had not moved off his legs. By the start of the second summer, the patience of Wesuhkechahk gave out.



"Kitchi-usine, if you don't get off my legs, I will call on my big brother to free me," declared Wesuhkechahk. But still, the rock sat silently on top of his legs.

So Wesuhkechahk sang and chanted until black clouds started forming in the sky. Soon the roll of thunder resounded as the Pithesiwuk flew high above them.

Suddenly, a bolt of lightning burst forth from the beak of one of the thunderbirds and split Kitchi-usine in half.



Wesuhkechahk was overjoyed, as he jumped to his feet. He cleaned the moss and plant growth from his skin and clothing. Then, he sat down to smoke an offering to his big brother, the thunderbird. Soon, he was on his way looking for more adventures!



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